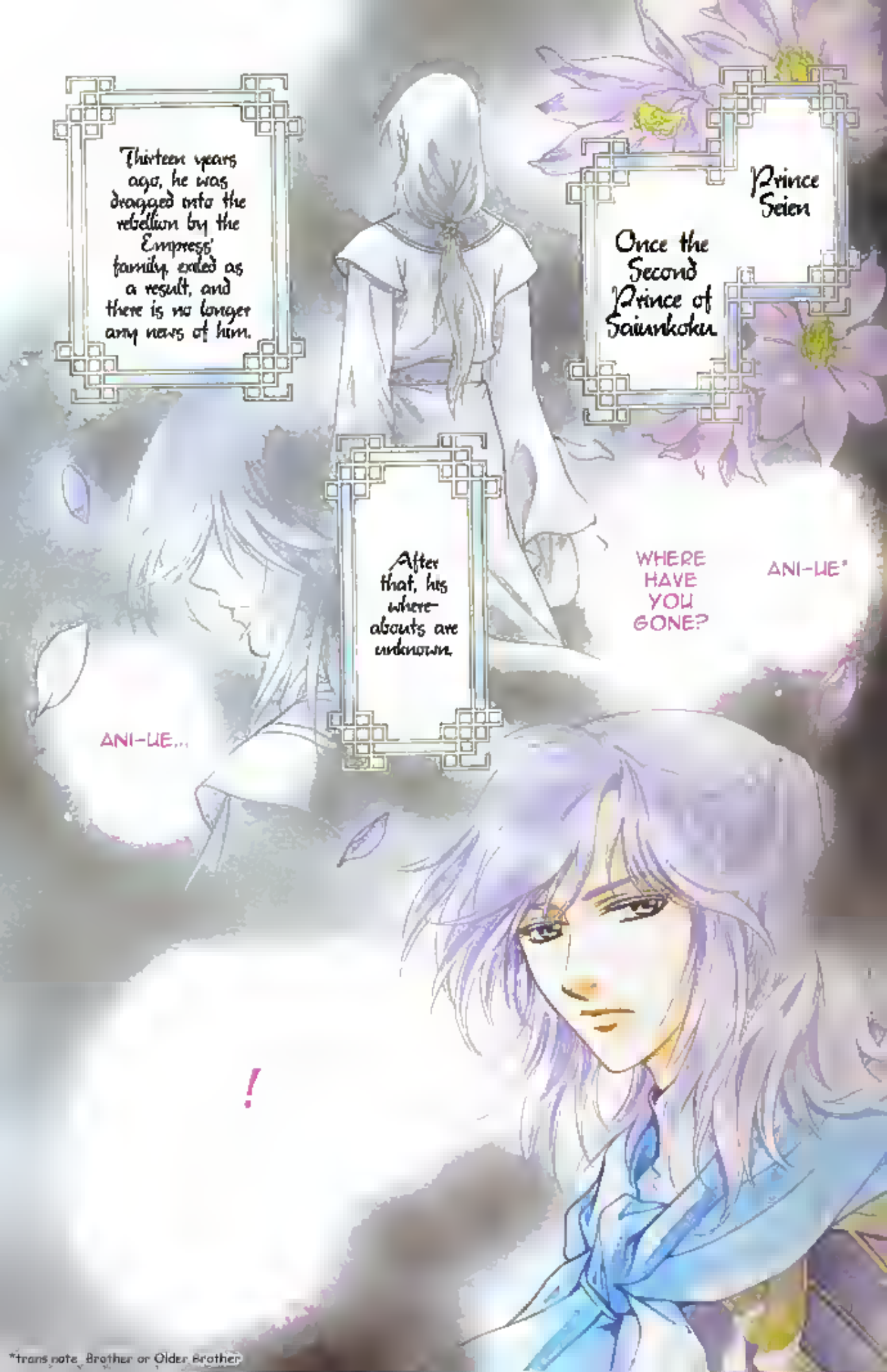
The Struggle of a Poor (?) Lady
SAIUNKOKU
MONOGATARI
CHAPTER 05


Thirteen years ago, he was dragged into the rebellion by the Empress' family, exiled as a result, and there is no longer any news of him.
Prince Seien
Once the Second Prince of Saiunkoku
After that, his whereabouts are unknown.
WHERE HAVE YOU GONE?
ANI-UE*
ANI-UE...
!

*trans note, Brother or Older Brother

A dream...
Thinking back, since that time...
I strangely haven't been seeing that dream anymore.
WHY DID I THINK OF SEIRAN?
I was always chasing after my brother's shadow that went farther and farther away...
And he never turned back.
SEIEN ANI-UE...

Shi Ryuuki

Emperor of Saiunkoku However he has no motivation in governing the country And with Shuurei who is now his Consort ?

Shi Seiran

Now a servant the Kou family that took him in thirteen years ago He acts as a guardian for Shuurei

Kou Shuurei

Daughter of the Kou family In order to support the house while being poor she enters the Imperial Court as Royal Consort

❖ Summary and Character Introduction ❖

Daughter of the impoverished Kou family Shuurei was attracted by 500 pieces of gold as payment to be Royal Consort to Saiunkoku Emperor Ryuuki AT first Shuurei thought of Ryuuki as an irresponsible emperor But after hearing about his harsh childhood and his brother who was exiled, Shuurei began to change her feelings towards him

Things in the Imperial Court heat up as Seiran and Shuurei realize Ryuuki is only pretending to be stupid and they detect that someone is trying to poison Shuurei

彩雲国物語

RUSTLE
STEP
AN INCENSE BAG...
RUSTLE

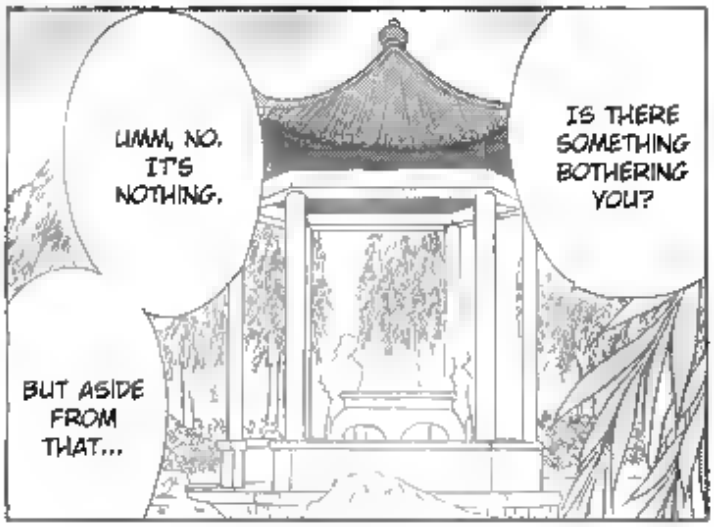
SCRAPE
FLICKER
.....
RUB
SMILE
MISTER, THERE'S ALREADY A VOICE~
HM~M

WELL...
IT'S ABOUT TIME... ISN'T IT?
YOU'RE GIVING THIS TO ME?
SMILE
CERTAINLY. I BELIEVE IT IS PERFECT FOR SUCH A PRETTY LADY SUCH AS SHUUREI-DONO.
...
PLEASE, LEAVE ONCE YOU'RE DONE WITH YOUR BUSINESS.

AND WHY ARE THEY ALL NEW?!
AND WHEN I REALIZE IT'S MISSING, IT COMES RIGHT BACK.
RECENTLY, MANY OF MY THINGS GO MISSING.
AND THIS INKSTONE, TOO...
SO STRANGE.
YOU HAVE A LOT OF POTENTIAL.
YOU SHOULD WORK HARD!
I CAN'T IMAGINE SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF A NORMAL PERSON BUT,
And that and this-
KOU KIHI-SAMA*, HAVE SOME SNACKS...
IS THIS SOMETHING THAT OCCURS IN THE IMPERIAL COURT OFTEN?
FUU
IF THEY DON'T STOP WASTING MONEY ON EXPENSES...
AND CONSE-QUENTLY, THIS IS UNECO-NOMICAL
THIS IS REALLY BADLY MANAGED.
FUU
FUUU
Wait, is it that daughters of rich families just don't notice-?
THANK YOU.
*Kihi meaning Royal Consort

AS EXPECTED, VERY WELL DONE.
SE-SEIRAN!!

OJOU-SAMA.
YES?


UMM, NO. IT'S NOTHING.
IS THERE SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?
BUT ASIDE FROM THAT...

OH, MY!
I WAS JUST THINKING OF SOME THINGS.
pachi
pachi

ARE YOU BEING BULLIED BY THE LEFT IMPERIAL ARMY?
...EH?

Oh, how sad the soldiers are!
O..OJOU -SAMA
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT...
JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE A GOOD FACE, THEY MIGHT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU STAND OUT BECAUSE YOU HAVE GOOD TECHNIQUE AND YOU LOOK GOOD. AND IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S LIKELY YOU'LL BE SINGLED OUT.
RECENTLY, YOU'VE HAD A DARK FACE ON.
IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOUR BANGS ARE TOO LONG, RIGHT?
THEN, WHAT IS IT? DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER WORRIES?
BUT, PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. IT'S NOTHING IMPORTANT.
...I CAN'T WIN AGAINST YOU, OJOU-SAMA.

SEIRAN, IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING, JUST SAY IT, OKAY?
CLUNK
SIGH-
I'M MIGHT NOT BE RELIABLE BUT IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING...
LIKE I'M ALWAYS UNLOADING MY WORRIES ON YOU,
YOU SHOULD DO THE SAME TO ME.
OJOU-SAMA...
OH, HOW AM I GOING TO PAY BACK THE DEBT I OWE TO YOU?
I FEEL AWFUL BECAUSE I CAN'T PAY YOU BACK-
BUT IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK.
TURN
YOU'VE NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE, SEIRAN.

I FEEL UPLIFTED WHEN I SEE THE NORMAL OJOU-SAMA.
WHENEVER I SEE YOUR ENERGETIC SELF, IT ALWAYS CHEERS ME UP.
YOU'VE PAID ME BACK A LONG TIME AGO.
THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL.
...REALLY?
IT'S TRUE.
IT'S LIKE WHEN I HAVE WORRIES, OJOU-SAMA CAN'T BE CHEERFUL.
THEN... THIS TIME, TOO?
I FEEL LIKE I GET THE POWER TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEM FROM YOU.
WHENEVER I LOOK AT YOU, I FEEL LIKE I CAN DO ANYTHING.

WELL, YOU ALWAYS PUT OTHERS BEFORE YOU.
YOU NEVER THINK OF YOURSELF AND YOU ALWAYS MAKE ME AND FATHER YOUR PRIORITY.

BUT I WORRY! YOU'RE ALWAYS SO UNFORTUNATE.
...UNFORTUNATE?

I DON'T THINK MYSELF UNFORTUNATE FOR DOING THAT.
I'M REALLY HAPPY.
I PUT YOU AND DANNA-SAMA FIRST BECAUSE YOU'RE PRECIOUS TO ME.
YOU'RE REALLY IMPORTANT TO US, TOO.

NO, IT'S NOT.
BESIDES THAT, EVERYTHING ELSE I DO IS VERY SELFISH.

THE LOGIC OF THE UNFORTUNATE.

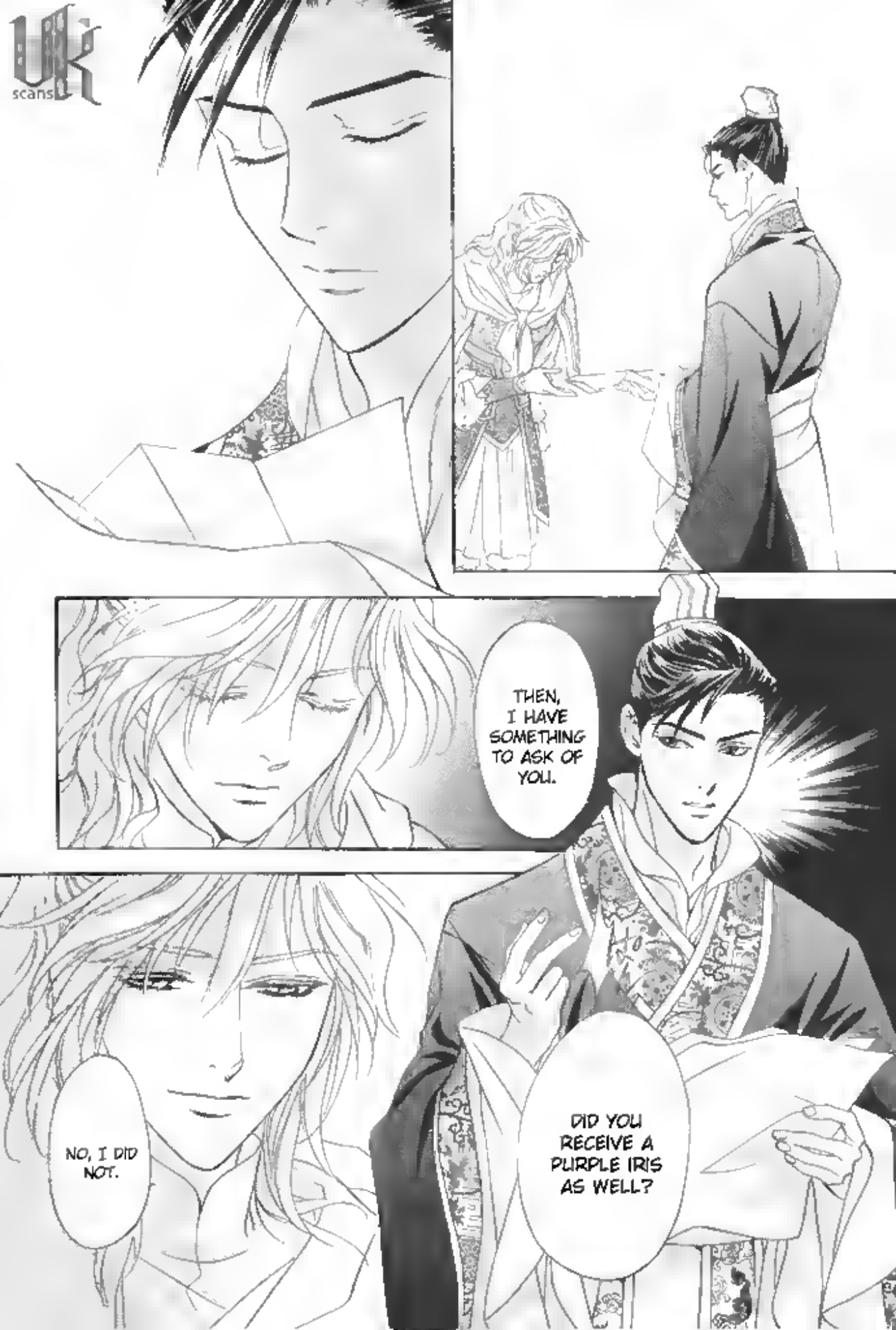
BY THE WAY, ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT?
WELL... I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT IT, IT'S JUST STRANGE...
REALLY?
YES.
That's great... It's his usual smile.
YAWN~~~

WHACK
Listen seriously!
IT HURTS!
Is it okay to have a subordinate who hits the Emperor so easily?
I GET LETHARGIC DURING AFTERNOON LECTURES.
WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE BLACK WOLF, RIGHT?
YES.
IT IS SAID THAT HE WAS THE MAN WHO HEADED THE ASSASSINATION GROUP " WOLVES OF THE WIND" THAT SERVED UNDER THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR.
DIRTYING HIS OWN HANDS INSTEAD OF THE EMPEROR'S,
HE PERFORMED TASKS BEHIND THE SCENES THAT COULD NEVER BE BROUGHT TO LIGHT.
WITHOUT THE PUBLIC KNOWING, HE GOT RID OF CONSPIRATORS AND KEPT THE COUNTRY SAFE.
AFTER THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR DIED, HE DISAPPEARED

A COUNTRY CAN'T BE ORDERLY IF THERE WERE ONLY GOOD THINGS HAPPENED.
IF THE BLACK WOLF DIDN'T EXIST, WE PROBABLY WON'T HAVE SUCH PEACEFUL TIMES RIGHT NOW.
DO YOU NOT KNOW ABOUT IT?
I DON'T. IT WAS BEFORE I WAS BORN.
IT'S NOT SOME-THING PEOPLE KNOW.
When Father was young, there were tireless struggles.
IF ANYONE WOULD KNOW, IT WOULD BE THAT OLD MAN.
SO, IT'S SOMETHING THAT CANNOT FIT WITH IDEALS, I WONDER.
I don't like the sound of it, though.

YES?
SHUUREI.
...
I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING AFTERWARDS.
BLACK WOLF, HUH?
NOW, HE'S NOTHING BUT A LEGENDARY ASSASSIN WHO IS VERY SKILLED.
INTERESTING. ...SHALL WE GO LISTEN?
NO.
I HAVE TO SPEAK TO YOU, GENERAL RAN.

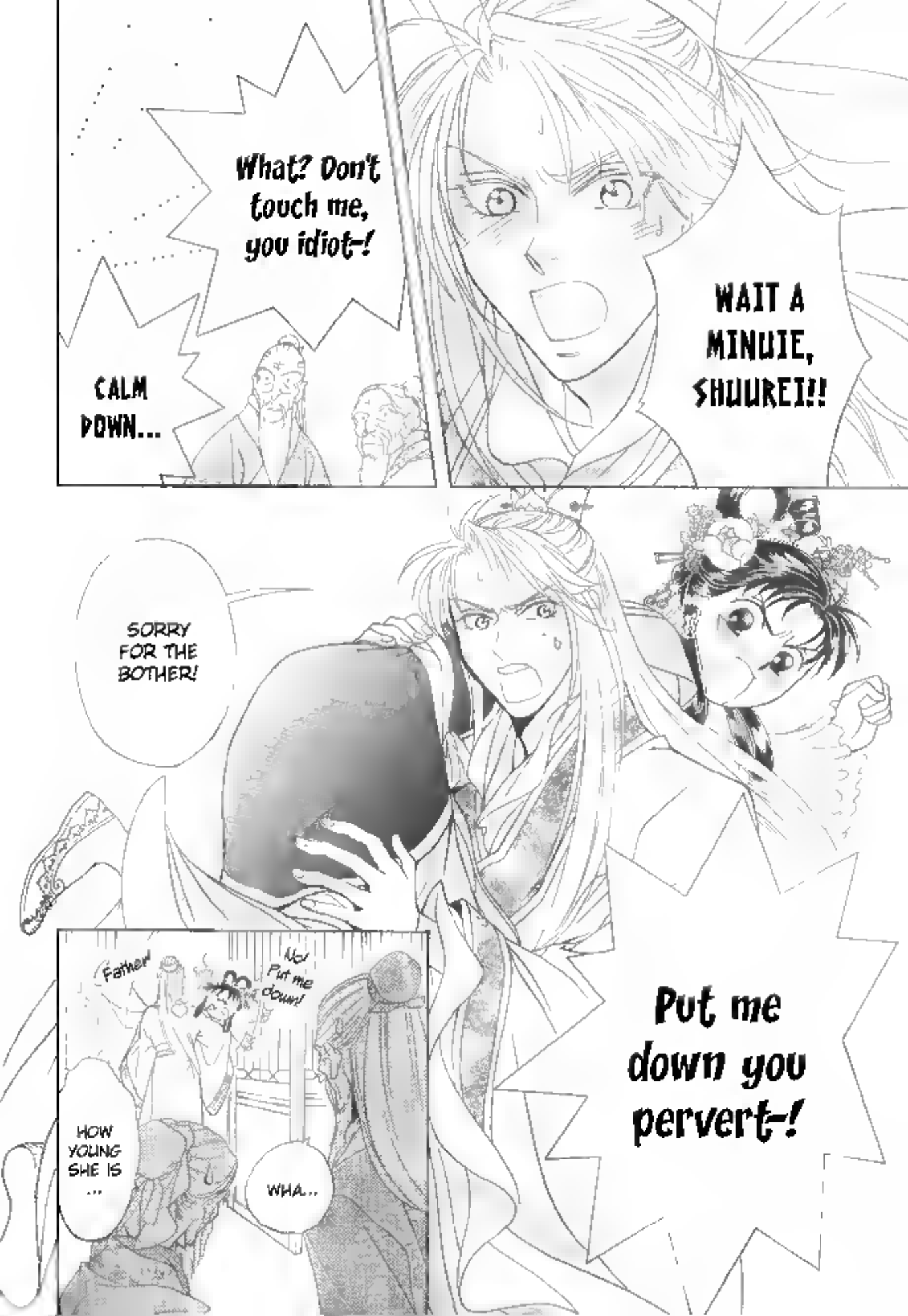
DID YOU RECEIVE ANYTHING FROM HIS MAJESTY?
IS THAT SO.
THEN, PLEASE TAKE THIS.
YES, A PURPLE IRIS...
KOUYUU DID AS WELL.


THEN, I HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OF YOU.
DID YOU RECEIVE A PURPLE IRIS AS WELL?
NO, I DID NOT.

WHAT'S WRONG? SO SUDDEN...
PRINCE SEIEN...
HOW COULD I FORGET SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
SAY, SA...
DO YOU REMEMBER THE STRUGGLE FOR THE THRONE EIGHT YEARS AGO?
AT THAT TIME, ONLY THE KOU AND RAN FAMILIES DIDN'T PARTICIPATE...
THAT WAS A STRUGGLE WHERE THE SEVEN NOBLE FAMILIES SUPPORTED THE PRINCES
THAT SPLIT THE COUNTRY AND CREATED CHAOS.

HO, HO, HO!
THE SA FAMILY RETAINED THE POWER THAT YOU HAVE NOW ONLY BECAUSE YOU SERVED THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR.
I AM PRAISING YOU.
IS THAT IRONIC?
YES. IF HE WERE PRESENT, THERE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE THRONE.
HE WAS THE BRIGHTEST OF THE PRINCES.
COME TO THINK OF IT, PRINCE SEIEN WAS EXILED BECAUSE HIS GRANDFATHER WAS A FOOL.
How unfortunate.
IT'S UNFORTUNATE, BUT IN EVERY FAMILY THERE IS A FOOL.
SLAM
WHERE COULD HE BE NOW...

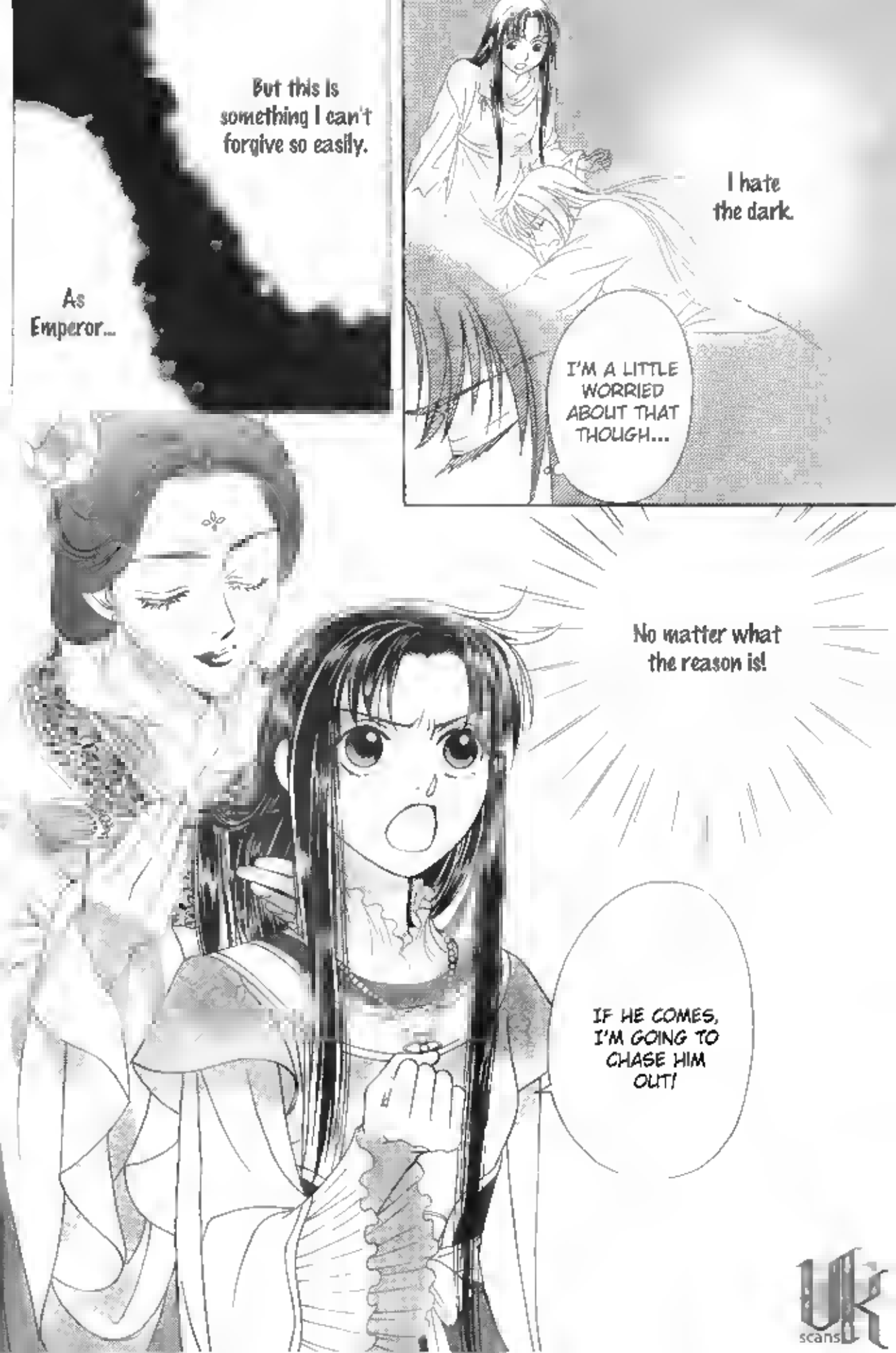
I... I WANT TO...
SHU... SHUUREI-DONO?
SHOU TAISHI, SA TAIHO...
Leave this Court right now!

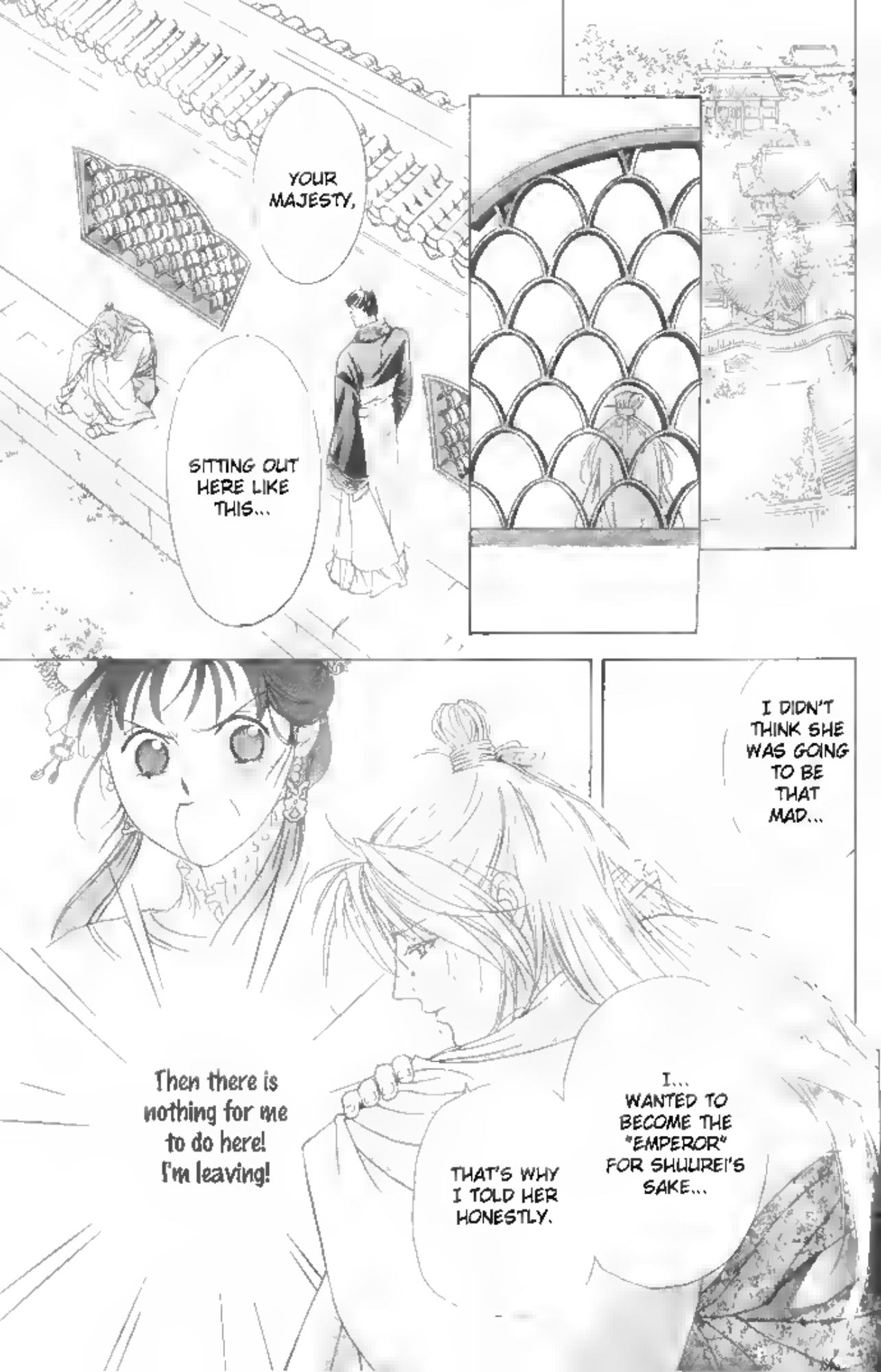

What? Don't touch me, you idiot-!
CALM DOWN...
WAIT A MINUTE, SHUUREI!!
SORRY FOR THE BOTHER!
Father
No! Put me down!
HOW YOUNG SHE IS ...
WHA...
Put me down you pervert-!

HIS MAJESTY WAS PRETENDING TO BE STUPID...
I don't believe it!!
THUNK
CLANK
That stupid jerk of an emperor! He was watching me try my best and laughing at me!
CLUNK!
He was making fun of me all this time!
MAKING FUN OF ME-
WELL, OF COURSE! IT'S NOT SOMETHING HARD.
HE THOUGHT HE COULD PRETEND TO BE IRRESPONSIBLE ...

DO-DON'T LET SHUUREI OUT ONE STEP.
Open up-
SHU... SHU-SHU-SHUSU!
I don't think he was trying to make fun of you...
With that look!
AND DON'T LET ANYONE SEE HER LIKE THIS.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
RIGHT NOW, AS HER HUSBAND, I...
OH THAT'S RIGHT, SHUUREI-SAMA. I CAME HERE TO GIVE YOU THIS, FROM KOURIN.
I won't be fooled!
Anywway, I won't see him even if he comes!
HMM...

SHE WAS WORRIED BECAUSE YOU THREW A FIT JUST NOW.
YES. A SECRET FORMULA, IT SEEMS.
SHE SAYS IT WILL HELP YOU SLEEP IF YOU PUT IT ON BEFORE GOING TO BED.
THIS IS... PERFUME ?
Let's fix your hair.
YES.
CAN YOU THANK HER...
FOR ME?
Maybe I overreacted a bit...
Kourin ...
OF COURSE!
UMM... TONIGHT, WILL YOU BE ALONE?
BY THE WAY, SHUU-REI-SAMA,


But this is something I can't forgive so easily.
As Emperor...
I hate the dark.
I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT THAT THOUGH...
No matter what the reason is!
IF HE COMES, I'M GOING TO CHASE HIM OUT!


YOUR MAJESTY,
SITTING OUT HERE LIKE THIS...
I DIDN'T THINK SHE WAS GOING TO BE THAT MAD...
Then there is nothing for me to do here! I'm leaving!
THAT'S WHY I TOLD HER HONESTLY.
I... WANTED TO BECOME THE "EMPEROR" FOR SHUUREI'S SAKE...

I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS TEMPORARY ...
To overlook my studies...
A Royal Consort to serve that purpose only...
MOREOVER, THERE'S A TIME LIMIT?!
WELL, RIGHT NOW, IT IS STILL WITHIN OUR POWER.
AND NOW, WE ARE PREPARED FOR THE WORST.
PREPARED, YOU SAY...
sigh
Well, well
...Are you a dog?
YOUR MAJESTY,
TRUTHFULLY, YOU'VE BEEN WITH WOMEN BEFORE, RIGHT?
WHY DID YOU PRETEND TO BE STUPID UP UNTIL NOW, YOUR MAJESTY?
THIS WAY, I COULD GET SHUUREI TO CARE ABOUT ME MORE.

WELL, FROM THE WAY YOU TREAT SHUUREI-DONO.
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
HOW ...
AND NOT JUST ONCE OR TWICE...
BUT YOU KEPT QUIET ABOUT IT.
...
...I NEVER LIED ABOUT IT.
I NEVER SAID I ONLY LIKED MEN!
WELL, THAT'S TRUE. SHE WOULDN'T CROSS THAT DANGEROUS BRIDGE AND COME TO THE IMPERIAL COURT.
Uu...
I THOUGHT SHE WOULD RUN AWAY.
IF SHUUREI KNEW ABOUT IT,

IF I LAY WITH WOMEN, THERE WOULD BE CHILDREN, RIGHT?
EH?
... BECAUSE I COULD.
WELL, THEN WHY DID YOU LEAD EVERYONE TO BELIEVE THAT YOU LIKED MEN?
YOUR MAJESTY,
YOU HAVE NO INTENTION OF STAYING EMPEROR?
Have someone else be Emperor...
IT WILL BECOME TROUBLESOME IF I HAD CHILDREN.
WELL, THAT'S TRUE.
THE EMPRESS AS WELL.
IF I HAD CHILDREN, IT WOULD BE BAD.
IT'S BECAUSE SHOUKA SAID THAT HE DIDN'T WANT ANOTHER CIVIL WAR TO BREAK OUT.

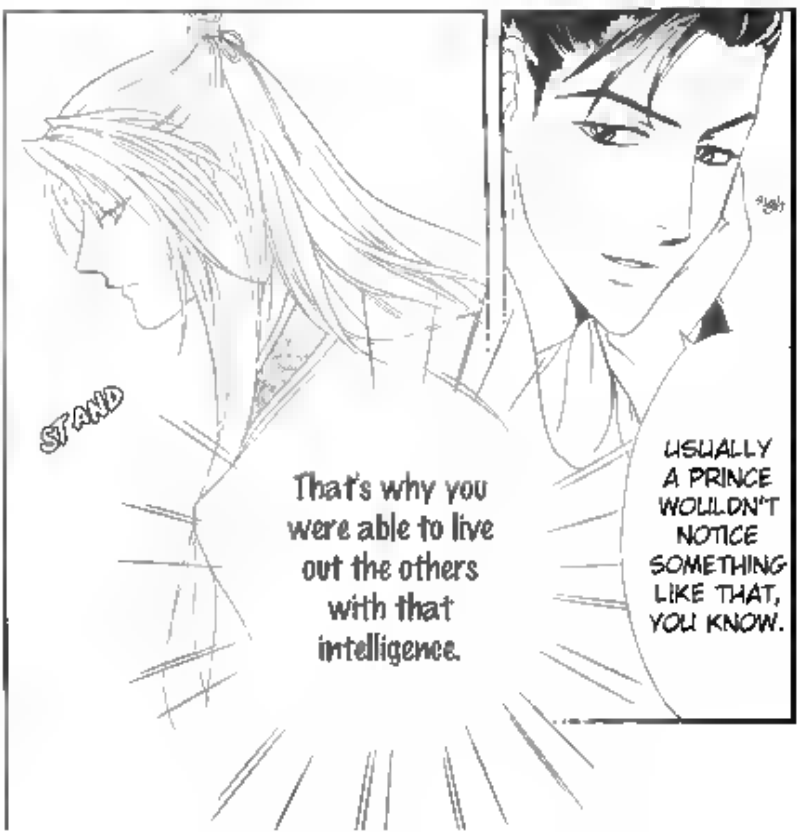
WELL, EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED AS EXPECTED.
EXCEPT ONE THING.
Not bad...
LOVE?
YOUR MAJESTY,
HAVE YOU EVER FALLEN IN LOVE?
PAT
PAT
This is uncomfortable...
...
WELL, WORRYING ABOUT IT IS PART OF YOUTH.
UGH
SO YOU INDULGED WITHOUT KNOWING LOVE?
THE PITY OF PITIES...

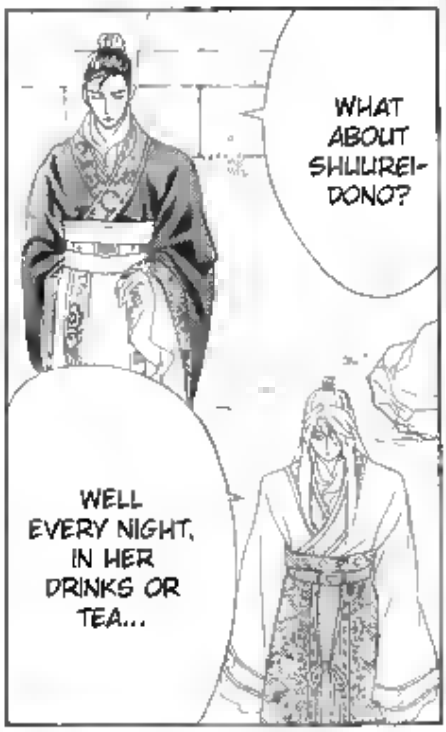
...
DO YOUR BEST, YOUR MAJESTY.
I PRAISE YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN WOMEN.
NOW YOU HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE FOR THAT.
WELL, YOU ANGERED SHUUREI-DONO ON PURPOSE.
I RECEIVED A REPORT FROM DOCTOR TOU AND KOUYUU. IT SEEMS THE POISON HAS GOTTEN STRONGER.
WHAT WAS IN THE POISON I GAVE YOU TODAY?

I WANT TO TELL THE CULPRIT TO HURRY UP AND NOTICE THAT WE'VE BEEN CATCHING ON.
AT FIRST, IT WAS THE SEWING NEEDLE AND THEN THE VOODOO DOLL, AND VARIOUS THINGS THEREAFTER.

...THIS WAS A DAILY OCCURRENCE A LONG TIME AGO.
I MUST SAY THAT YOUR MAJESTY IS VERY IMPRESSIVE IN FINDING THE POISON SO EASILY.

WHAT YOU GAVE ME THIS TIME...


STAND
That's why you were able to live out the others with that intelligence.
USUALLY A PRINCE WOULDN'T NOTICE SOMETHING LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW.


WHAT ABOUT SHIJUREI-DONO?
WELL EVERY NIGHT, IN HER DRINKS OR TEA...

THE EFFEC-TIVENESS OF THE POISON ISN'T GREAT BUT IF THIS PROLONGS...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN TAMPERED WITH.
THE PERFUME CASE, POTPPOURI BAG...

...WHAT ROUTE WILL THE POISON TAKE?

...SHE WAS FINE JUST NOW, RIGHT?
...YES, SHE SEEMS PERFECTLY FINE.

WHAT A PATHETIC TRICK...
WE'RE STILL TRYING TO DETERMINE IF THE EVIDENCE IS IN WRITING.
AND IT'S STRANGE THAT "THAT PERSON" IS MOVING SO FAST...

DON'T DO ANYTHING YET. TRY TO FIND OUT IF ANYONE ELSE IS INVOLVED.
ALSO, GIVE ME A DETAILED REPORT ON THE PERSON WHO IS DIRECTING THINGS.
YES.
WAS THERE ANYTHING TODAY?
YES, THERE WAS.
DON'T WORRY. WE ALREADY HAVE MEASURES AGAINST IT.
I HAVE ACCEPTED YOUR PURPLE IRIS.
PLEASE, LEAVE IT TO ME.

STOP
Damn.

I was careless.
This... could it be?
Ugh!
This map must be wrong!
No matter how you think about it, how can I get lost when I followed the directions so carefully?!
CRINKLE
Why don't you just admit it?
That you're hopelessly lost because you're directionless.

RI KOUYUU-SAMA.
THAT STUPID PERVERT..
AN ILLUSION ...?
SHUUEI?
TURN
NO, THANKS.
STEP STEP
IF IT'S ALRIGHT, I WILL ESCORT YOU.
WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO?
HUH?
HE HAS A VERY PROMISING FUTURE!
I HEARD HE ACCEPTED A FLOWER FROM THE EMPEROR.
PLUS, HE'S YOUNG AND SINGLE!
IT'S SECRETARY RI
HE'S THE MOST INTELLIGENT OF THE COURT.
KOUYUU -SAMA

You're the one who, at sixteen, achieved the Jougen title and thrust yourself onto the road of a successful career.
And you can't forgive that people who seek such a road hold themselves in high pride?
One day, you might be the victim of your conceited heart.
STEP
That man is frustrating to no end!
STEP
STEP
Shut up!
STEP
If I can get rid of the overseer of the Court, I will get rid of half of this!
And why are there so many rooms?!
It's a waste of timber and expenses!
For sure!

No, it's not.
A WOMAN'S VOICE?
THAT PERSON IS-
WHY ARE YOU INTERFERING?
WHAT IS IT?
...
Another illusion?
Who is she talking to?
The voice...
OPEN
WHO'S THERE?
IT'S WHAT HE WANTS!
I WAS ONLY TRYING TO HELP-
...
Is it here?

This girl is...
Is anyone around?
Go check in Kou-kihi's room!!

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI VOL02 CH05 / END)

Happy Birthday!!
- surrealistic

Happy birthday Kaori! I hope all your wishes come true and if you do drink, don't drink too much! haha
- xXxHoLiC

HAPPY BIRTHDAY KAORI!!!
- Vampireghosts

HAPPY BIRTHDAY KAORI-CHAN!!!!
- SARETTA84

Happy Birthday Kaori dear! <3
- Julnika

HAPPY BIRTHDAY KAORI-ONEESAN!! <33
- Akastrina

Happy Birthday Kaori-chan !!!! May this day bring u all what you wish! ^^
- Luv_Tackey

happy birthday kaori-chan & sakurinha-chan!
- xdestiny

yo! we're the same age, now!
Happy b-day!
gentleginger

Happy Birthday, Kaori & Sakurinha

ARG how did I miss this!!!
HAPPY 21TH BIRTHDAY!!!
Have fun.. YAY during the holiday!
- Tsunade

from the staff & forum

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 05

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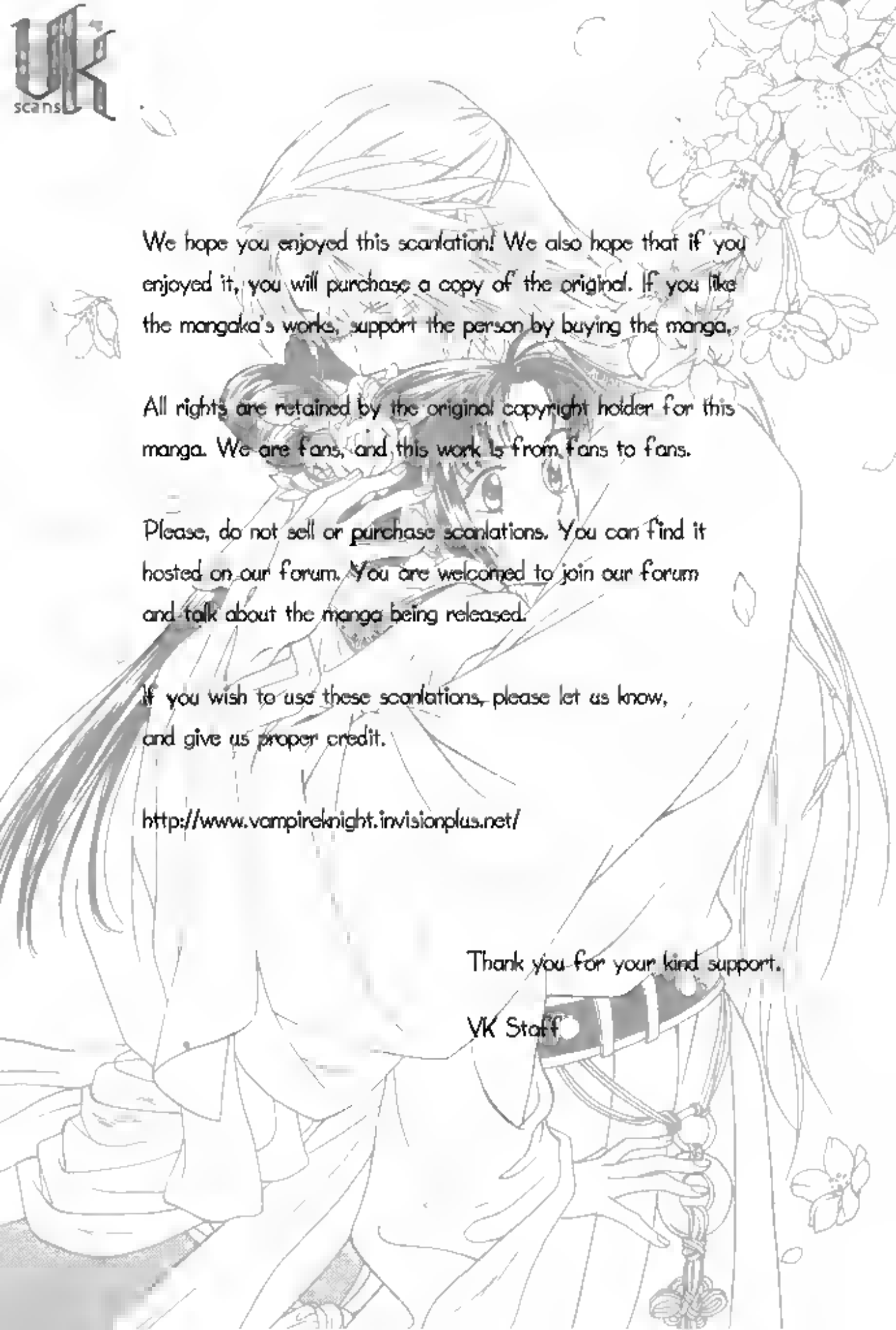

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VK Staff

The Struggle of a Poor (?) Lady:

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 06

彩雲国物語

❖あらすじと人物紹介❖

金五百両と引き換えに、悴君と呼ばれる彩雲国の若き国王・劉輝の貴妃兼教育係となった、紅家の貧乏お嬢様・秀麗。生活を共にするうちに、劉輝への理解を深めていった秀麗だったが、悴君は演技、という突然の告白には大激怒！　後宮を退く、とまで言い出し大騒ぎに。

そんな日の夜、秀麗と劉輝の命を狙う影がついに動き出した。いち早く気配を察知した絳攸が秀麗の部屋に飛び込んだが、すでに秀麗の姿はなく…!?

紫劉輝

お金しか見ねる国王。/ 国政はやる気なし。主な人：秀麗に…？

茈静蘭

13年前に紅家に捨われ仕える家人。秀麗のお守り役でもある。

紅秀麗

名門・紅家のお嬢様。貧乏を家を支えるため、貴妃の名前で後宮に入る。

紅黎深／秀麗の父親にして、紅家の主。

藍楸瑛／武人、左羽林軍将軍。

李絳攸／文官、吏部尚書。

青太師／朝廷三師のひとり。

IT SEEMS OUR OPPONENT IS WELL TRAINED.
...WHILE WE WERE OCCUPIED, SHUUREI-DONO WAS TAKEN AWAY AND DISAPPEARED LIKE SMOKE.
THERE ARE STILL OTHERS, AMONGST KOURIN'S?
SHUUREI ...
THAT MEANS WHOEVER GOT THE BETTER OF US WASN'T PART OF KOURIN'S PLAN.
WE THOUGHT THAT THE PERFUME GIVEN TO US BY THAT GIRL WAS HARMLESS BUT...
WELL, AT LEAST WE WERE ABLE TO ASCERTAIN KOURIN'S INTENT.
THERE IS SOMEONE BACKING HER.

SHUUEI, YOU'LL BE IN CHARGE OF LOCATING AND CAPTURING "HIM".
BE SURE TO KEEP PHYSICAL HARM TO A MINIMUM.
AT YOUR COMMA-ND.
THOUGH SINCE THE BEGINNING "HE" DIDN'T IMAGINE KOURIN WOULD DO SOMETHING.
KOUYUU, PLEASE STAY WITH KOURIN.
ONLY REPORT TO SHOUKA WITH THE DETAILS.
YES.
WE HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING IN ONE DAY!
MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION OF THOSE WHO ARE INJURED!
AND WAKE UP ALL THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF RANKS BELOW GRAND MASTER TOU!

...YOUR MAJESTY, THERE IS ANOTHER PERSON WHO IS MISSING.
ISN'T THIS UNUSUAL GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES?
THE CHANCES OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THIS CASE IS POSSIBLE...
THE ONE WHO WAS ASSIGNED TO PROTECT THE ROYAL CONSORT, SEIRAN, HAS DISAPPEARED.
You're wrong!
BASED ON WHAT?
NOTHING ... BUT...
THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

.....
YOUR MAJESTY,
IT SEEMS THAT YOU DIDN'T GIVE A FLOWER TO SEIRAN.
WHY IS THAT?
I DIDN'T FEEL THE NEED TO.
I DIDN'T NEED SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO BE SURE...
THAT SEIRAN WOULDN'T BETRAY SHUURE! OR ME.
JUST AS HOW I DON'T DOUBT YOU TWO WHO CHOSE TO ACCEPT THE FLOWERS I SENT AND SWORE YOUR LOYALTY TO ME.

HE HAS CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF
DOESN'T CARE ABOUT POWER OR AUTHORITY
HE'S STUBBORN AND NOTHING WILL WORK ON HIM
BELIEVING FIRMLY IN HIMSELF.
HE WILL NEVER BOW HIS HEAD WITHOUT REASON!
IT... SEEMS LIKE YOU HAVE A VERY HIGH OPINION OF HIM.
I KNOW FOR A FACT, IT'S NOT A MATTER OF OPINION.
ISN'T HE COMPLI-MENTING HIM?
THIS...
BUT IT'S NOT BAD!

THAT KIND SMILE HAS NEVER LIED TO ME.
SO YOUR MAJESTY BELIEVES SEIRAN TO NOT BE INVOLVED?
YES.
WHAT IS THIS?
YOU PASS, YOUR MAJESTY.
SOMETHING SEIRAN LEFT. THOUGH HE TOLD ME NOT TO SHOW YOU.
BUT AFTER ALL THAT YOU SAID...

IT'S BEEN A WHILE... IS WHAT I SHOULD SAY?

PRINCE SEIEN.
SHU...
DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS...?
SHUUEI,
I...
DIDN'T NOTICE AT ALL...
THAT SEIRAN WAS...
I REMEMBER HIS SWORDS-MANSHIP,
AND OTHER THINGS REMINDED ME AS WELL.

WAIT!
I KNEW...
IF HE GAVE THIS TO YOU AND DISAPPEARED, DOES THAT MEAN SEIRAN IS MOVING ON HIS OWN?
SE... I...
NO... I KNEW...
Shuuei!
SEEMS THAT WAY. HE MUST HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING.
PLEASE CALM DOWN, YOUR MAJESTY.
HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.
MY BROTHER!
IF YOU KNEW THAT MUCH WHY DID YOU LET HIM GO?
SE... SEIRAN IS...
HE'S MY BROTHER, SEIEN!
IT'S TO PROTECT BOTH YOU AND SHUUREI-DONO.

note: it means "older brother"
FWAP
ANI-UE...
Watch out!
ALSO, IF SEIRAN WENT TO "THAT PERSON", THEN WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIS SAFETY.
SEIRAN'S AIM IS PROBABLY...
DANG
HE'S FAST AT RUNNING.
OPENS
KOUYUU!
...

SHUUEI, KOUYUU, DO WHAT I ORDERED EARLIER.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!
YOUR MAJESTY ?
IT SAYS THAT IF YOU WANT TO GET SHUUREI BACK, TO GO ALONE TO SENTOUJYOU.
.....
I'M GOING ALONE.
OTHERS WILL JUST BE IN THE WAY.
YOU DON'T MEAN TO GO ALONE, YOUR MAJESTY.
IT'S AN OBVIOUS TRAP...
!

ROGER!
HURRY!
SMILE
SEEMS THAT WAY.
drip
I THOUGHT I HAD LOST THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO ME...
SEIEN ANI-UE...
TO THINK YOU WERE THIS CLOSE TO ME.
wipe

I DEFINITELY WON'T LOSE YOU AGAIN!
THUD
WHOEVER IS TAKING A REST, DRAG THEM OUT!
WE'LL START MOVING TROOPS FROM THE LEFT AND RIGHT IMPERIAL ARMIES!
WE'LL TREAT THEM SPECIALLY.
General Ran
This is a direct order from his Majesty!!
Capture Grand Master Sa!

I FEEL SICK...
IT'S DARK ...
AND THEN SHUUSUI BROUGHT SOME TEA...
I BURNED SOME OF THE INCENSE KOURIN GAVE ME,
pain
pain
Ugh
AND THEN I GOT REALLY SLEEPY..
MY HEAD HURTS!
UGH, I CAN'T REMEMBER ...
WHERE IS THIS?
WAIT,
HAVE I BEEN KIDNAPPED?!

THUMP
THUMP
I CAN'T MOVE MY BODY WELL.
huff
I THINK... I...
DRANK SOME STRANGE MEDICINE... OR SOMETHING.
huff
WAVER
THIS IS NO JOKE.
WAVER
I NEED TO HURRY AND GO BACK.
AND IT'S SO DARK...
WHICH WAY SHOULD I GO?
!

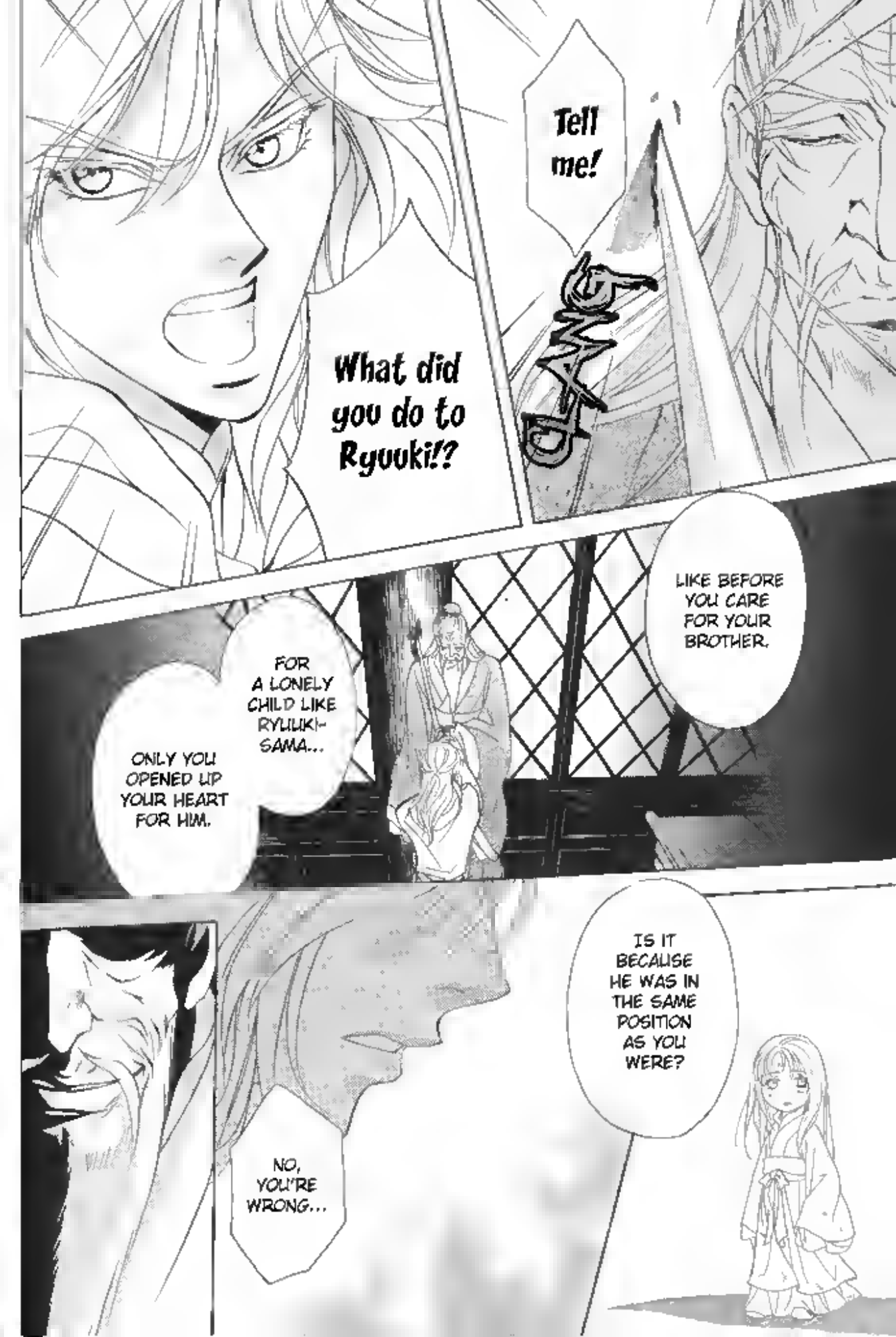
OH MY. WEREN'T YOU GOING TO LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY?
No...!
WHERE IS OJOU-SAMA?
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU SEEK!
LISTEN TO WHAT?
I WANTED TO BRING THE SA FAMILY OUT FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE SEVEN FAMILES.
ALONG WITH SHOU AND SOU, WE WERE LOYAL TO HIS MAJESTY WHILE I AIMED TO BE ABOVE ALL OTHERS.
WITH ONLY THAT IN MIND, I WORKED FOR THE LATE HIS MAJESTY.
PRINCE SEIEN.
WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, I REMEMBER THE PAST.

I'M MAKING A GAMBLE.
GAMBLE?
WHAT USE IS IT TO DO THIS NOW?
BUT EVEN WITHOUT GIVING UP YOUR POWER AND AUTHORITY, THE KOU AND RAN FAMILIES HAVE TO ANSWER TO YOU.
...YOU WANTED TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.
Shou Yousen!!
AT ONE TIME, I REALIZED ...
THE ONE PLACE I CAN NEVER REACH.
YOU CAN PROBABLY CALL HIM A GENIUS,
BUT YOU'VE REACHED THE STATUS OF ONE OF THE GRAND MASTERS.
A VERY ANNOYING FACT.
NO MATTER HOW HARD I WORK, SHOU WOULD SURPASS ME EASILY.

I AM JUST AN ORDINARY PERSON. I GOT TO WHERE I AM NOW BECAUSE I WORKED THREE TIMES AS HARD AS A NORMAL PERSON DOES.
THINGS LIKE STATUS, REPUTATION, POWER AND AUTHORITY ONLY CAME AS A RESULT.
BUT FOR SHOU IT WAS DIFFERENT.
HE GENUINELY GAVE HIS ALL FOR HIS MAJESTY.
AND WAS ALWAYS ABOVE ME...
HE SHOWED ME THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND AN ORDINARY PERSON LIKE ME.
WITH A COOL AIR ABOUT HIM,
AS IF ONLY HE HIMSELF EXISTED, EVERYTHING WOULD STILL BE FINE.
WITHOUT THINGS LIKE FAMILY TYING HIM DOWN!!
AND EVEN WITH EVERYTHING AT HIS WILL, HE NEVER WAVERED.
I COULD NOT UNDER-STAND IT.
I CAN'T BECOME LIKE SHOU!!
AND THUS I CAME TO DETEST HIM!

HOW THINGS MOVE...
AND WHETHER I'LL BE ABLE TO DRIVE HIM TO A CORNER,
THAT IS ALL ...
THAT IS MY ONLY DESIRE RIGHT NOW
TO BE ABOVE SHOU,
FOR THAT REASON, YOU USED OUJO-SAMA...
BUT YOU APPEARED BECAUSE OF THAT.
I DIDN'T EXPECT RYUUKI-SAMA TO BE SO ENAMORED WITH KOU-KIHI.
NOTHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT THAT.
REALLY, BEING OLD IS TROUBLESOME, HUH.
A GAMBLE
A GAMBLE I CAN MAKE BECAUSE I AM OLD.
YES, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST AND LAST, I'M BETTING MY LIFE ON IT...

RUMORS OF RYUUKI-SAMA ARE ALREADY LIKE THAT, I'M SURE EVERYONE WOULD BE HAPPY TO GIVE THE CROWN TO YOU.
WELL, AS LONG AS YOUR LINEAGE IS AUTHENTIC.
YOUR EYES ARE THE SAME AS THE LATE HIS MAJESTY'S.
YOU DID WELL IN RETURNING
I SAID I AM NOT SEIEN!
ONLY HIS MAJESTY HAS TO DIE.
IT IS A GREAT THING THAT HE IS STILL WITHOUT CHILD, THUS A CIVIL WAR WON'T HAPPEN.
RIDICULOUS! YOU WANT TO REPEAT THE CIVIL WAR OF EIGHT YEARS AGO!!
REST ASSURED.
WHAT DID YOU DO?
!


What did you do to Ryuuki!?
Tell me!
LIKE BEFORE YOU CARE FOR YOUR BROTHER.
FOR A LONELY CHILD LIKE RYUUKI-SAMA...
ONLY YOU OPENED UP YOUR HEART FOR HIM.
NO, YOU'RE WRONG...
IS IT BECAUSE HE WAS IN THE SAME POSITION AS YOU WERE?

IF I WASN'T LOVED BY HIM,
I COULDN'T HIDE MY HEART AND LIVE IN THIS NEST OF EVIL.
SEIEN ANI-UE!
ANI-UE!
IT IS BECAUSE HE LOVED ME DEARLY,
GENUINELY, WITHOUT ANY ULTERIOR MOTIVES.
BECAUSE RYUUKI WAS WITH ME, I WAS ABLE TO SURVIVE IN THE COURT.
THE ONE WHO WAS PROVIDED A PLACE IN HIS HEART WAS ME...
MY BROTHER WHO WAS THE ONLY ONE TO LOVE ME.
MY YOUNGEST BROTHER WHO WAS LEFT ALL ALONE BY HIMSELF.
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF LIFE HE HAD TO LIVE WHEN I SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED!?
The one who was loved was me!!

IT SEEMS YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TAKE THE CROWN SO EASILY.
Tell me! What have you done!?
HOW I REGRETTED IT..
THE COURT IS ALREADY MAKING THE TRANSITION TO THE NEXT GENERATION.
YOU ARE STRAYING FROM TIMES.
YOU'RE A FOOL, GRAND MASTER SA.
YOU ARE BLIND.
RAN SHUUEI AND RI KOUYUU HAVE ALREADY CHOSEN THEIR LOYALTY.
ALSO, THEY WON'T JUST STAND BY AND WATCH YOUR PUPPET TAKE THE THRONE.
WHAT...

THEN...
AND ASIDE FROM EVERYTHING, MY BROTHER IS NOT AS FOOLISH AS YOU THINK.
AND I'M NOT AS OBEDIENT AS YOU THINK I AM EITHER.
I'LL HAVE YOU BECOME OBEDIENT!
FWIP
WISH
THIS IS...
Ugh!
KLANG

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO MAKE SOMEONE INTO A PUPPET
FURTHER-MORE,
SHAA
Grand Master Sa!
CAPTURE HIM!
Wha-
YOUR MOST ESTEEMED RYUUKI-SAMA HAS PROBABLY ALREADY PASSED AWAY ALONG WITH KOU-KIHI.

KLANG
!?

ISN'T IT A NICE FRAGRANCE?
...!
KUCH
Ugh...
PLEASE REST FOR A WHILE.
WHEN YOU AWAKEN, YOU WILL BE ON THE THRONE.
THE ONES WHO PULLED ME OUT OF THE DARKNESS...
RYUUKI...
OJOU-SAMA...
I DON'T WANT TO...
GRAND MASTER

UGH...
GRAND ...
MASTER SA!
THUNK
FEEL REGRET AGAIN!
DAMN ...
BAM
FWOOSH

ハッ
!?
GET YOURSELF TOGETHER!
IT'S DARK ...
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR?

I...
CAME TO TAKE SHUUREI BACK!

GAAAAGH!
WHERE IS SHUURE!?
ANS-WER!
WHERE?
IT'S TOO DARK TO TELL!
RYUUKI'S VOICE!?
BUT I CAN TELL IT'S FROM BELOW.
NGH...
NGH...!
RYUUKI!!

THUNK
THUNK
BIT YOUR OWN TONGUE, HUH...
THE PRINCESS IS HERE.
SOUNDS OF TWO PEOPLE.....
LET'S HAVE YOU DROP YOUR WEAPON.
YEAH BUT SADLY SHE CAN'T MAKE A SOUND.
I DEFINITELY SENSE HER.
IS IT REALLY HER?

AHH, THAT SOUND. HE THREW AWAY HIS SWORD!
CLATTER
DON'T BELIEVE HIS LIES!
RYUUKI, DON'T LISTEN TO HIM!
HE- HE'S LYING!!
WHAT AN IDIOT!!
GOOD BOY.
snicker
AH... THIS STUPID CLOTH!!
UMPH!
MMPH ...
THOSE TWO ARE AFTER YOUR LIFE, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
STRUGGLE
MY HAIR PIN?!
CHING
slip

KICK
RYUUKI!
COME TO YOUR SENSES!
Ryuuki! That's not me!
Idiot !!

!?
FWP
I KNOW.
YOU...
SHUURE! DOESN'T HAVE SUCH HEAVY FOOTSTEPS LIKE YOUR PARTNER.
I THOUGHT YOU DROPPED YOUR SWORD...
Sniff
ZOOM
ZOOM
IF I DO THAT, SHUURE! WILL HATE ME.
YOU'LL MAKE A FINE ASSASSIN...
FLOMP
IT WAS THE SHEATH. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES THAT HAVE AN ADVANTAGE IN THE DARK.
AND...

I won't forgive you!
Answer me, Ryuuki ...!
Wait a sec, you're not dead are you?
Ryuuki!
What happened !?
IT'S OKAY NOW.
KYA AAA !!!
I'M NOT DEAD.
SHUUREI ...
SORRY!!
ST... STUPID!
DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!

I'M GLAD YOU'RE OKAY.
THANK YOU. IT WAS DARK,
YOU MUST'VE BEEN SCARED.
HUG
I DON'T CARE.
YOU DID YOUR BEST.
HOLD ON, RYULIKI, I CAN'T BREATHE.
YOU WERE HERE, SO I WASN'T.
I... I KICKED THE HAIR PIN YOU GAVE ME.
I'M SORRY.
CAN'T...
Eh?

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI VOL.2 CH6 / END)

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 06

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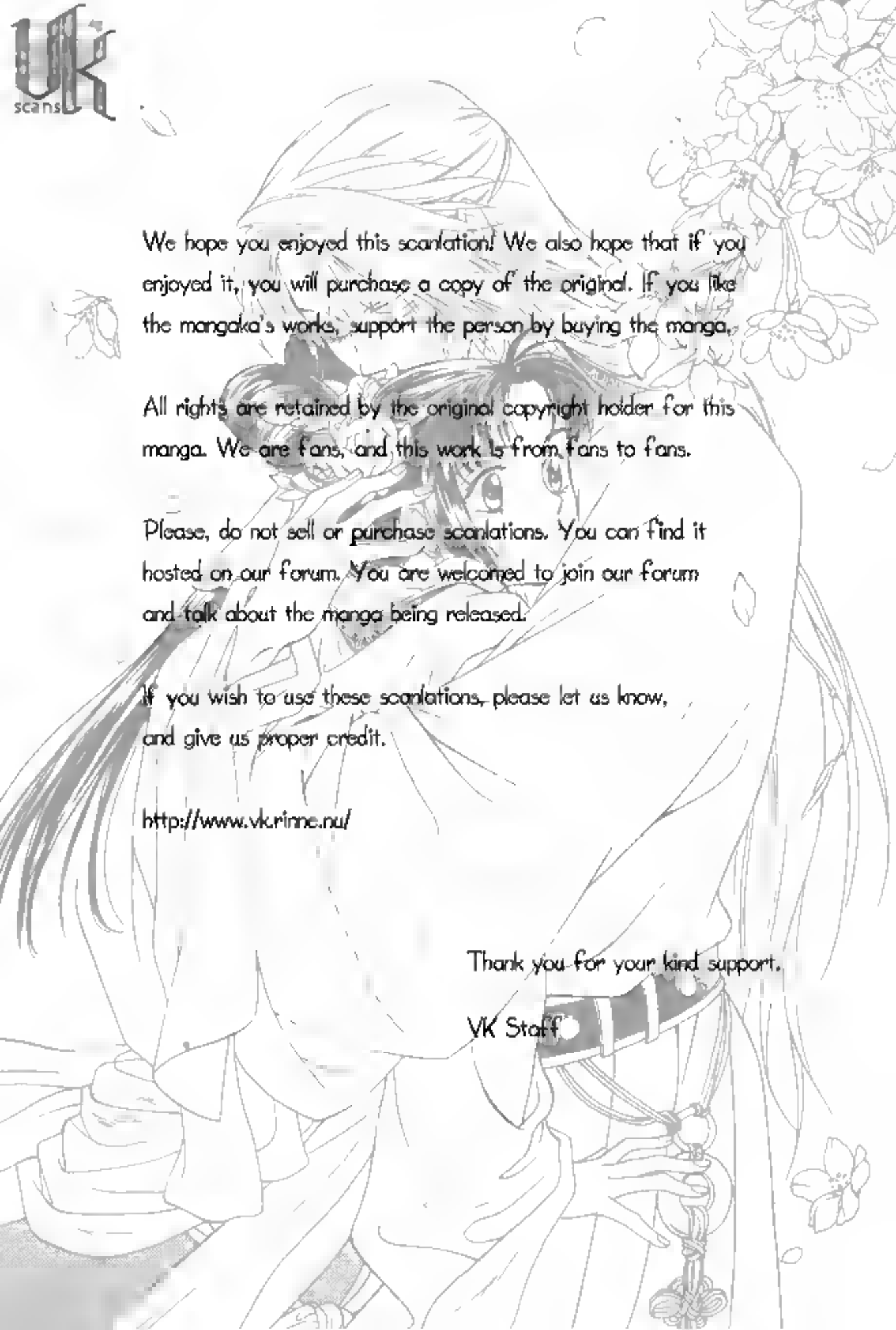

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VK Staff

SAIUNKOKU
MONOGATARI
CHAPTER 07

What ??
What happened?
IN THAT SPLIT SECOND, ONE GUST OF WIND BLEW...

DO YOU HAVE ANY INTENTIONS TO VOLUNTARILY SUBMIT YOURSELF?
WHY ...?
YOUR CAPTURE IS A MATTER OF TIME.
THE EMPEROR HAS IDENTIFIED YOU.
THE GIRL YOU PUT IN THE IMPERIAL HAREM.
YOU'VE BEEN DISCOVERED THROUGH KORIN.
SHE SINGLE-HANDEDLY PLANNED TO KILL LADY KOU FOR YOU, WHO SHE LOVES.
WHAT ...
YOUR IDENTITY WAS REVEALED THROUGH HER.
KORIN?
THAT GIRL SOMEHOW NOTICED YOUR PLANS.
I HAVEN'T TOLD HER ANYTHING.

KORIN...
NO... SHUSUI NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT THIS.
MASTER..
MASTER ENJUN.
YOUR PLAN HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY YOUR GOOD HEART.
YOU PICKED UP KORIN WHEN SHE COLLAPSED IN FRONT OF YOUR GATES BECAUSE OF STARVATION.
GRAND MASTER SHOH ONLY.
YOU'RE...
"WOLVES OF THE WIND"
AND I...
THE PEOPLE WHO CAN MOVE HER ARE THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR...
SHUSUI...
IF SHE IS THE ASSASSIN I KNOW,

You're the "Black Wolf"
Kou Shoka!!

Ha...
Ha ha ha!
Wa ha ha ha ha!
huff
So he knew it all the long!
huff
Once again, I was merely dancing on the palm of his hand!
UNTIL THE FINAL MOMENT ...
SHOU!!
THE ONE WHO I'M GIVING MY LIFE TO IS NOT YOU.
huff
huff
TAKE THE PRINCE AWAY.
WOBBLE

WOBBLE
SO RECKLESS.
IF YOU HAD QUIETLY LOST CONSCIOUSNESS, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN SAVED UNHARMED.

THIS IS...!?
THAT IDIOT.

KOUYUU.
WHAT HAPPENED TO SHUREI... AND SEIRAN?
I CAN'T SAY THEY ARE SAFE...
BUT ELDER TOH IS INSPECTING THEM.
HOW IS HER CONDITION?
IF I HAD NOTICED HER LATER, SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD.
GRAND ADVISOR SA HAS DISAPPEARED.
EVERYBODY INVOLVED IN HIS SCHEME WERE CAPTURED, BUT WE HAVEN'T FOUND GRAND ADVISOR SA HIMSELF.
AS IF HE WERE ERASED BY SOME KIND OF SPELL...

YOU AND KORIN ARE VERY SIMILAR.
THIS IS WHY WOMEN ARE STUPID!
SHE DIDN'T CONSIDER WHY GRAND ADVISOR SA DIDN'T INVOLVE HER IN THE FIRST PLACE AND JUST RAN OFF BY HERSELF...
AFTER ALL THIS, SHE TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE!
BUT IT'S NOT THE SAME.
LIKE HOW YOU WERE BOTH ADOPTED AS A CHILD AND TREASURED ...
YOU HAVE ME.
AND LIKE HOW YOU RESPECT AND LOVE YOUR FOSTER PARENT.

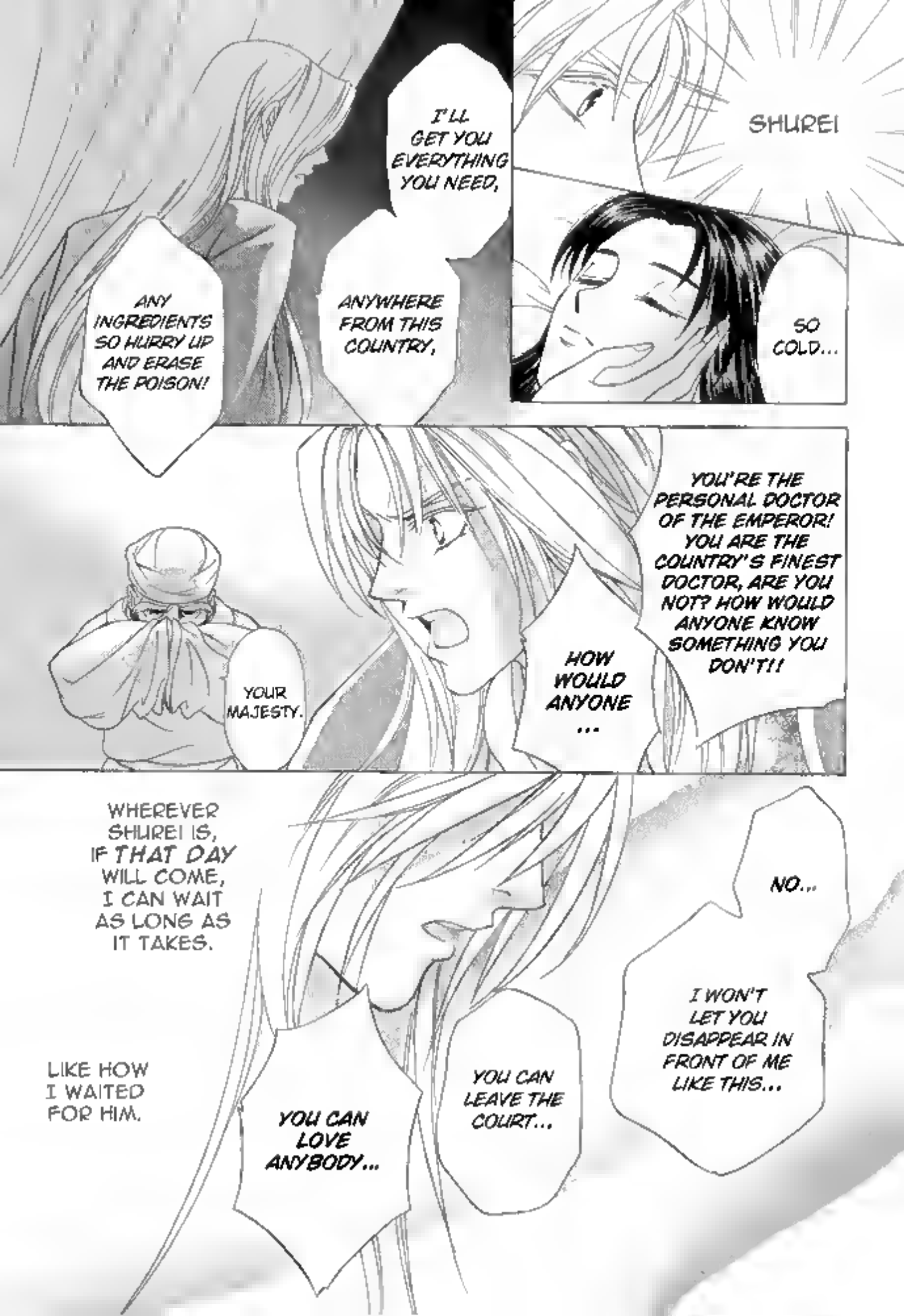
SINCE THE FIRST TIME I MET YOU, IT SEEMED LIKE IT WAS MY JOB TO BRING YOU BACK WHEN YOU GOT LOST.
I'LL STOP YOU WHEN YOU START RUNNING OFF ON YOUR OWN.
IN CASE THE PLAN FAILS, SHE WOULDN'T HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES.
SHE WAS SO CLOSE TO SHUREI, YET GRAND ADVISOR SA DIDN'T USE HER IN HIS PLANS.
STUPID GIRL.
SHE DIDN'T REALIZE THAT GRAND ADVISOR SA DIDN'T WANT TO DRAG HER IN...
HE ONLY WISHED FOR HER HAPPINESS.

THE MORE YOU ARE TREASURED...
THE MORE YOU WANT TO REPAY THAT PERSON
I CAN UNDERSTAND THIS GIRL'S DESPERATE FEELINGS!
BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND ...
FOR AN ABANDONED PERSON, THE ONE WHO TAKES THEM IN IS AN ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE.

He meant to say Seien (青苑) but corrects himself for Seiran (静蘭)

THE SOLDIER.. HAD SEVERE INJURIES.., BUT BECAUSE OF GENERAL SOU'S ASSISTANCE, HIS CONDITION IS STABLE.
BUT FOR LADY KOU..
WHAT?
BECAUSE YOUR MAJESTY HAD BEEN MAKING HER DRINK ANTIDOTES, MOST OF THE POISONS WERE NEUTRALIZED.
HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE POISON I AM UNAWARE OF.
SO... I CAN'T MAKE AN ANTIDOTE.
WH...AT?
IF I START RESEARCHING ABOUT THE POISON AND ASSUMING EVERYTHING WENT WELL, IT WILL STILL TAKE 3 DAYS TO MAKE AN ANTIDOTE.
BUT LADY KOU'S LIFE WILL BE..

AT THE EARLIEST, HALF A DAY, AT THE LATEST, WITHIN A DAY...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ...
ABOUT SHUREI'S LIFE?
MOVE!
DON'T SAY SUCH NONSENSE!
BEEN


SHUREI
SO COLD...
I'LL GET YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED,
ANYWHERE FROM THIS COUNTRY,
ANY INGREDIENTS SO HURRY UP AND ERASE THE POISON!
YOU'RE THE PERSONAL DOCTOR OF THE EMPEROR! YOU ARE THE COUNTRY'S FINEST DOCTOR, ARE YOU NOT? HOW WOULD ANYONE KNOW SOMETHING YOU DON'T!!
HOW WOULD ANYONE ...
YOUR MAJESTY.
NO...
I WON'T LET YOU DISAPPEAR IN FRONT OF ME LIKE THIS...
YOU CAN LEAVE THE COURT...
YOU CAN LOVE ANYBODY...
WHEREVER SHUREI IS, IF THAT DAY WILL COME, I CAN WAIT AS LONG AS IT TAKES.
LIKE HOW I WAITED FOR HIM.

DON'T LEAVE ME!
I won't accept you going someplace where I can never reach you.
Shourei!
YOUR MAJESTY,
YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN THE ANTIDOTE.

WHICH WILL YOU CHOOSE?
ONE IS LETHAL POISON,
ONE IS THE ANTIDOTE.
ALWAYS LIKE THIS!
STOP FOOLING WITH ME!
YOU'RE ...
ALWAYS LIKE THIS...

IT ALL ENDS WHEN I GET CAUGHT UP WITH THE GREED IN FRONT OF ME AND CHOOSE.
BOTH ARE POISON!
CHOOSE ONE?
IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT YOU WOULD DO TO "TEST" ME IN THIS SITUATION.
SHUREI WILL DIE.
THIS MAN WILL USE SHUREI'S LIFE AND THE CIVILIANS' LIFE WITHOUT SECOND THOUGHTS TO FULFILL HIS PLANS.
YOU'RE THE ONE...
THAT PREPARED THE POISON THAT NOT EVEN ELDER TOH KNEW ABOUT.
GIVE ME THE ANTIDOTE NOW.
IN RETURN, I WILL GRANT ONE THING YOU TRULY DESIRE.
SOMETHING I TRULY DESIRE?

I WILL BECOME AN EMPEROR YOU WILL APPROVE.
IS THAT FINE!?
WE HAVE A DEAL.
smile

LAST TIME I SAW YOU, YOU WORE AN ANGRY FACE.
SHUREI.

SHUREI ...
WAKE UP.
LOOK AT ME AND SMILE ONCE AGAIN,
SHUREI.

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH SHUREI AND SEIRAN?
THIS IS RATHER UNPLEASANT, "BLACK WOLF".

NOT TO WORRY. SHUREI SHOULD BE ON HER WAY TO RECOVERY BY NOW.
EVEN THE LEGENDARY ASSASSIN, WHO WORKED UNDER THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR AND SLAUGHTERED MANY, WILL BECOME AN ORDINARY PARENT IN FRONT OF HIS DAUGHTER AND HOUSEHOLD SERVANT.

OH?
GRAND MASTER SHOU.
YOU REALLY HAVEN'T CHANGED SINCE THE REIGN OF THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR

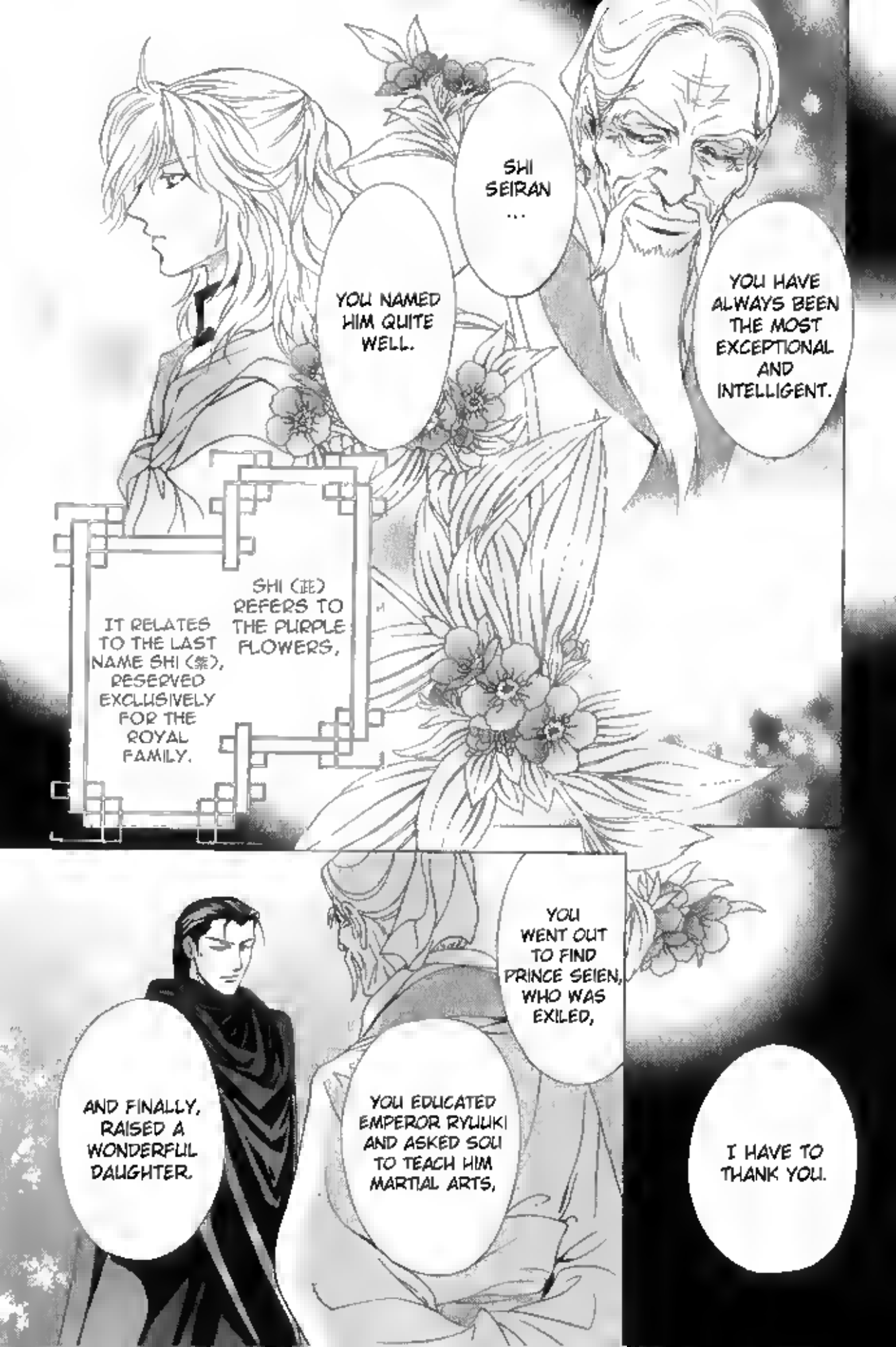
WHEN DID I NOTICE...
THAT THIS HONORABLE ELDER WILL NOT MOVE FOR ANYONE BESIDES THE EMPEROR...
YOU ALWAYS ONLY THINK ABOUT THE "EMPEROR". EVEN NOW AND EIGHT YEARS AGO.
YOU THINK WAY TOO MUCH ABOUT THE EMPEROR.
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU DERAIL SOMEONE'S LIFE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO DIES...
YOU'RE SO CRUEL TO EVERYTHING ELSE BESIDES THE EMPEROR WHO YOU APPROVE OF.
YOU DON'T CARE WHETHER THOUSANDS AND MILLIONS OF LIVES BECOME CORPSES.
WHY? WHY WON'T YOU LOOK AT ANYTHING BESIDES THE EMPEROR?
WHY ARE YOU BOUND TO THE EMPEROR?
BOUND... YOU SAY SUCH AN INTERESTING THING.
YES, I AM BOUND.
NOT TO THE EMPEROR BUT TO A "PROMISE".

BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW THAT.
THE ONE I MADE LONG AGO...
PROMISE?
LORD RYUUKI HAS TRULY BECOME A FINE EMPEROR.
SHOKA, YOU SERVED THE EMPEROR FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE CIVILIANS,
BUT I SERVE THE COUNTRY AND THE CIVILIANS FOR THE EMPEROR.
THE EMPEROR IS MY PRIORITY.
HENCE, I DON'T CARE WHO I HAVE TO SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO GUIDE THE EMPEROR.
EVEN IF THAT IS YOUR DAUGHTER'S LIFE.

BUT NOW THE COUNTRY IS STABLE. "WOLVES OF THE WIND" IS NO LONGER NECESSARY.
SO EVEN IF WAS HEARTLESS, I ACCEPTED THIS JOB.
YOUR DECISIONS WERE ALWAYS RIGHT. EVERY TIME I TOOK A LIFE, THE COUNTRY BECAME BETTER.
I'VE TAKEN MANY LIVES UNDER YOUR ORDERS.
DID I EVER BREAK THAT PROMISE?
I STILL REMEMBER.
I ONLY HUNT CRIMINALS. THIS IS THE PATH I CANNOT LEND TO OTHERS.
HE PLANNED TO KILL EMPEROR RYUUKI.
GRAND ADVISOR SA IS A CRIMINAL, IS HE NOT?
YOU USED HER IN SUCH MANNER—
SHUSUI ...
SHE IS ALSO PART OF THE "WOLVES OF THE WIND."

YOU MADE HIM DO THIS.
GRAND ADVISOR SA... INARGUABLY WANTED TO STAND ABOVE YOU.
BUT HE ALSO HAD THE STRONG RATIONALE AND THE WILLPOWER TO WITHHOLD HIS AMBITION.
AND YOU EFFORTLESSLY CRUSHED IT.
YOU SENT SHUREI TO THE IMPERIAL HAREM, PUT SEIRAN NEAR EMPEROR RYUUKI,
AND ASSIGNED SHUSUI TO GRAND ADVISOR SA, ALL FOR THIS.
ABOVE SHOU..
YOU USED HIS LONG YEARS OF RIVALRY AGAINST YOU,
AND LET HIM SENSE THE PRESENCE OF PRINCE SEIEN.
DROVE HIM TO A POINT WHERE HE MAY EVEN BECOME A TRAITOR.
THIS WILL BECOME MY LAST BET.

EVERYTHING BEGAN WHEN THE EMPEROR BECAME FOND OF SHUREI BEYOND EXPECTATION.
YOU TRULY USED THE SITUATION TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.
FOR THE EMPEROR.
HM, BUT WHAT FOR?
EVEN THE VERY LAST PIECES
EVERYTHING WAS PLANNED TO HAVE LORD RYUUKI BECOME MORE SUITABLE EMPEROR.
GRAND ADVISOR SA WAS ONLY USED FOR THIS.
AM I WRONG?
AND AWARENESS OF HIS POSITION AS AN EMPEROR!
EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT WHEN HE SAW SHUREI AND SEIRAN ENDANGERED,
CAPABLE SERVANTS,
GOVERNING WOMEN,


SHI SEIRAN ...
YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST EXCEPTIONAL AND INTELLIGENT.
YOU NAMED HIM QUITE WELL.
SHI (施) REFERS TO THE PURPLE FLOWERS,
IT RELATES TO THE LAST NAME SHI (紫), RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY.
YOU WENT OUT TO FIND PRINCE SEIEN, WHO WAS EXILED,
YOU EDUCATED EMPEROR RYUUKI AND ASKED SOU TO TEACH HIM MARTIAL ARTS,
AND FINALLY, RAISED A WONDERFUL DAUGHTER.
I HAVE TO THANK YOU.

I WON'T FORGIVE YOU.
THE COUNTRY CAN GO ON BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU.
SAD IRONY, IS IT?
IT'S AN APPRECIA-TION.
I DIDN'T PLAN TO KILL THEM.
THUNK
WHO WERE INNOCENT AND DEVOTED TO THE EMPEROR.
YOU DIDN'T CARE KILLING ABOUT SHURE AND SEIRAN,
BE WARNED, YOU OLD MAN.
I WILL COME KILL YOU SOMEDAY.
...
YOU DIDN'T CARE IF THEY DIE AS A RESULT.

I'LL BE WAITING.
THE SUN IS RISING.
LONG AGO, I SAW MANY SUNRISES WITH SHOU AND SOU.

AND TIME PASSES...
I'VE GROWN OLD...
GUSTING THROUGH IT AS IF MY SOUL IS BURING...
VARIOUS TIMES!! LIFETIME...
I WITH THE EMPEROR, I'VE GONE THROUGH NUMEROUS WARS.
NO...
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT.

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI VOL2 CHOT / END)

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 07

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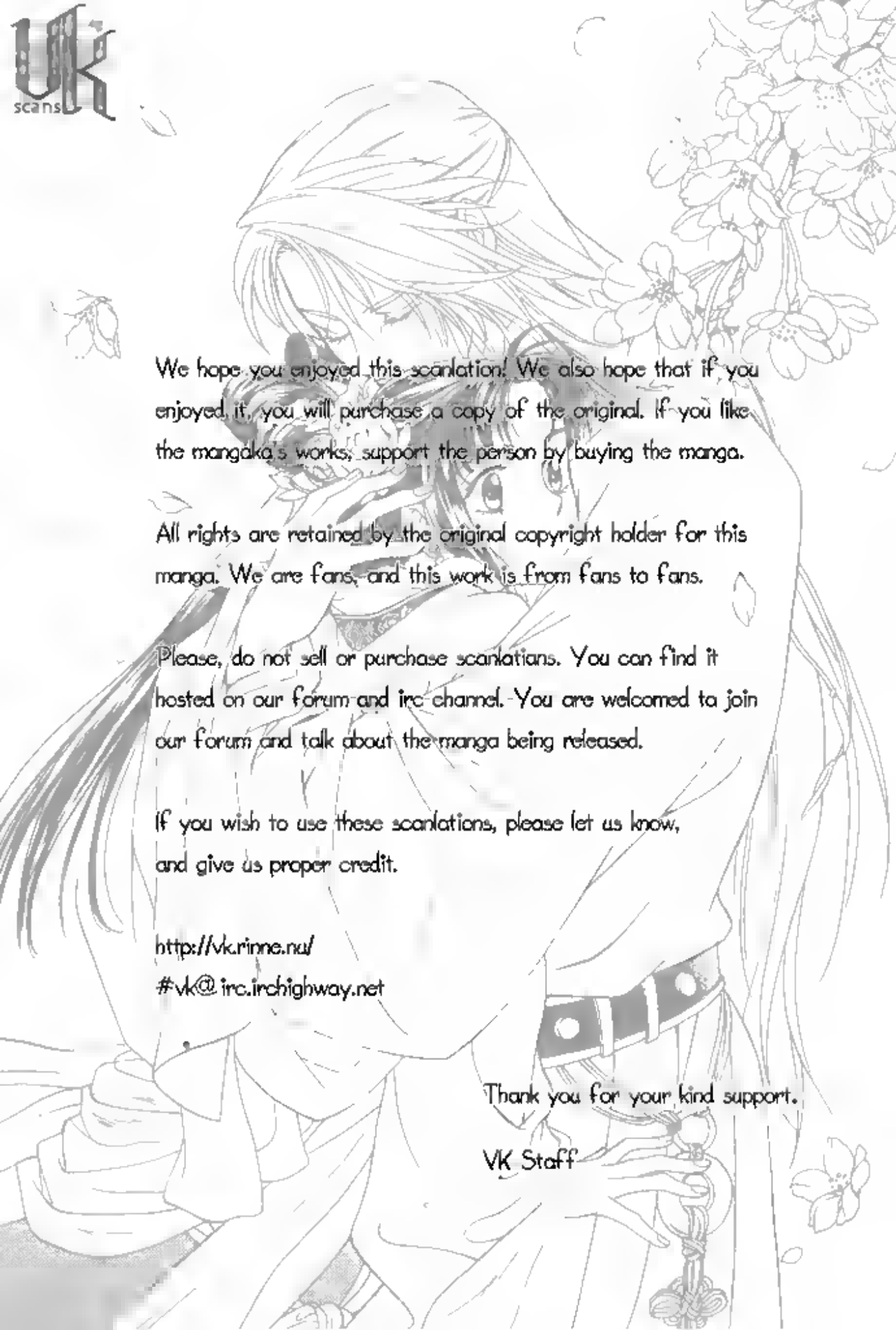

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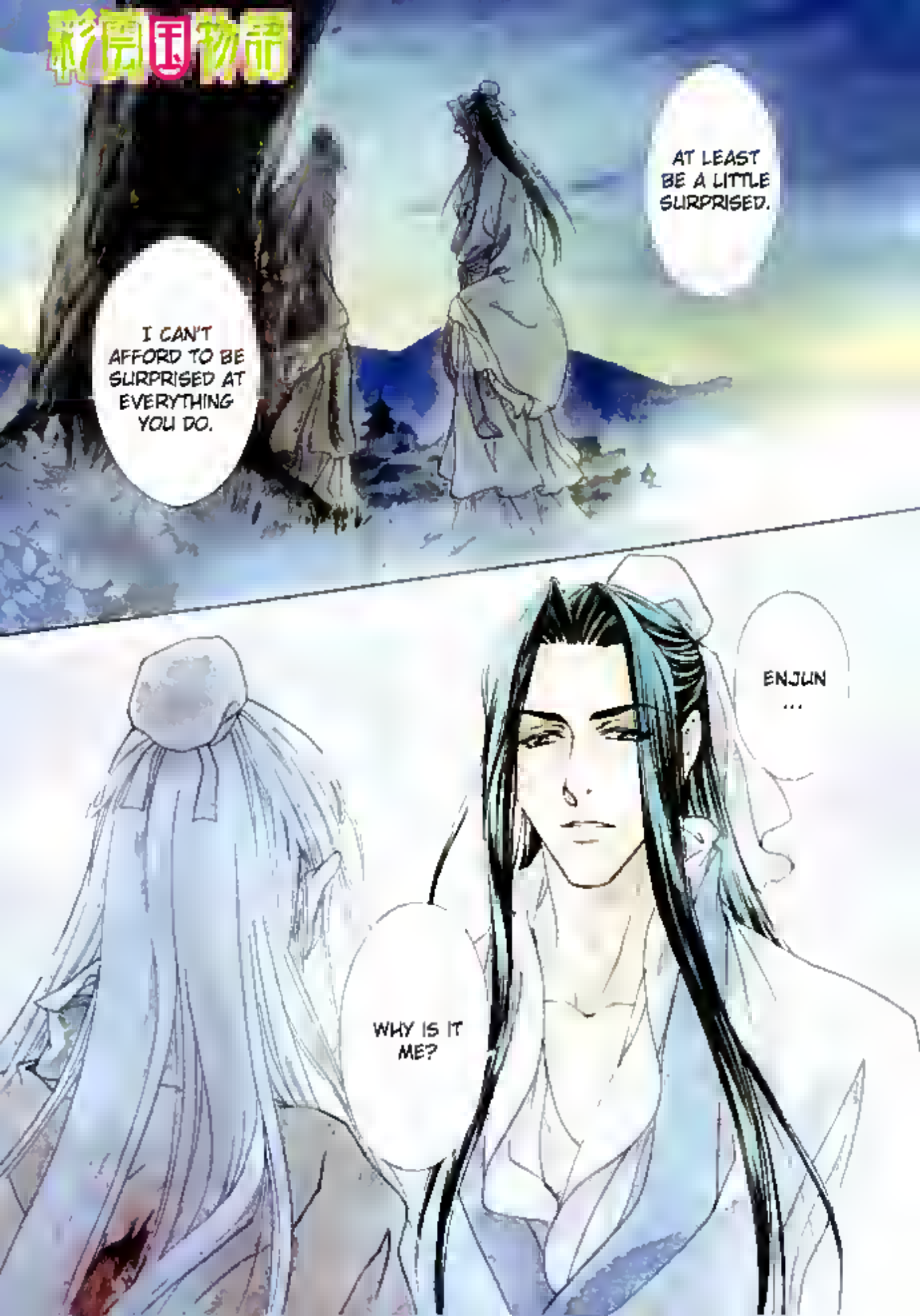
VK Staff

The Struggle of a Poor (?) Lady
SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI
CHAPTER 08


彩霓国物语
AT LEAST BE A LITTLE SURPRISED.
I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE SURPRISED AT EVERYTHING YOU DO.
ENJUN ...
WHY IS IT ME?

I'M NOT THE PERSON WHO YOU THOUGHT TO BE.
YOU NOW UNDERSTAND?
SHOU,
I FOLLOWED BECAUSE IT WAS YOU.
IT'S YOU.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO YOU ARE.
ALWAYS BEING A STEP AHEAD, EVEN TILL THE FINAL MOMENT...
THE MAN WHO REIGNED HIGH ABOVE ME.
I FOLLOWED YOU,
THE MAN IN FRONT OF ME.
YOU WERE STRANGE AFTERALL.
AND...
Swoosh
A VERY STUBBORN MAN.

WE SPENT 50 YEARS TOGETHER ...
YOU, SOU, AND I... THE THREE OF US.
YOU ALWAYS WALKED AHEAD OF ME WITH A COOL FACE.
I HATED YOU.
YES...
YOU REMAIN A STUBBORN MAN TILL THE END.
I LIKED YOU.. REALLY.

HEY...
Pull
I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN SURPRISED BY YOU COUNTLESS TIMES.
I WANTED TO ASTONISH YOU, AT LEAST ONCE.
SHA
SAY ENJUN, YOU STILL LIKED ME AFTER ALL THIS?
TO A POINT WHERE YOU WILL GRANT ME YOUR FINAL MOMENT?
HMPH.

ENJUN...
I LOVED YOU, ENJUN.
FRIENDSHIP AND HATRED...
THAT A PASSIONATE HEART...
YOU FOLLOWED ME EVERYWHERE...
WHO DO YOU THINK THIS WAS ALL FOR?
I WAS SUPPOSED TO LEAVE THE COURT LONG AGO... YET I SPENT 50 YEARS AND AGED TOGETHER.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "I'VE GROWN OLD"...?
UNTIL THIS FINAL MOMENT, YOU REMAINED A RATIONAL AND PASSIONATE MAN... ALWAYS KIND TO WOMAN, LIKE YOUR YOUTHFUL DAYS.
AS A FRIEND WHO YOU LOVED AND HATED...
AS A MAN WHO DERAILED YOUR LIFE ...
HOWEVER, IT IS MY DUTY TO KILL YOU.
AS A FRIEND WHO LOVES YOU. WHAT NO ONE ELSE CAN DO...
I'M ENVIOUS OF YOU, ENJUN... ENVIOUS OF YOUR HUMANITY.

RYUUKI?
SHURE!?
THANK GOODNESS, SHURE!!

SHURE!
...
SHURE!
...
HEY, RYUUKI!
THANK GOODNESS.
WHAT ARE YOU CRYING ABOUT?
AN EMPEROR ISN'T SUPPOSED TO CRY THAT MUCH.
SILLY.

SHUSUI ...
I'VE SAID IT BEFORE, IN ORDER TO FORGET THAT I'M OF THE "WOLF OF WIND", I SHOULD LIVE THE LIFE THAT I LIKE.
SHUSUI, WHY DO YOU STILL WANT TO CONTINUE LIVING IN THE PALACE?
SHUUREI-SAMA HAS WOKEN.
IS THAT SO, THAT'S GREAT...
YOU NEED NOT WORRY ANYMORE.
YET NOT TEACHING YOU HOW TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE.
TAKING YOU IN AND CARING FOR YOU,
I'VE ALWAYS REGRETTED ...

I LIKE EVERYTHING AROUND YOU.
BUT THE THINGS I'VE DONE
SO SORRY...
I'M SORRY...
THE MISTRESS,
AND SHUUREI TOO,
SOB
SOB
I'VE ONLY EVER WANTED TO STAY BY YOUR SIDE...!
NO, SHOUKA-SAMA...
I FOUND THIS IN THE ROYAL STOREHOUSE,
AN UNKNOWN PERSON SENT THIS TO ME...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SENT THIS, AREN'T YOU, SHUSUI...
THANK YOU!
THIS IS...

AH...?
BEING ABLE TO MAKE SOMETHING OF THIS STANDARD EVEN WHEN YOU'RE UNSKILLED AT WOMANLY WORKS,
IF MY WIFE COULD SEE IT, SHE'D BE VERY MOVED.
AND YOUR SKILLS HAVE IMPROVED GREATLY, I THINK THIS IS AN OUTSTANDING WORK OF ART.
THIS LION!
THIS IS A FLOWER EMBROIDERY ...
EH?
THIS...
THIS IS A FLOWER ...
Especially if you hold it upright...
Well, if you hold it this way.
AH!
IS... IS THAT SO...
AH... IT'S LIKE THIS AFTER ALL..
Yes.
YOU AREN'T WRONG!
HA HA HA
SMILE

YOU ONLY HAVE TO PASS THIS TO THE SUBORDINATE OF GRAND ADVISOR SA WHO WANTS CONCUBINE KOU TO LEAVE THE PALACE.
I GUARANTEE THAT SHUUREI'S LIFE WON'T BE AT RISK..
BEING A WOLF, YOU ARE OBLIGED TO FOLLOW GRAND MASTER SHOU'S ORDERS.
IT'S MY FAULT FOR NOT FINDING OUT EARLIER.
SHOUKA-SAMA...
HOW DID HE KNOW OF A POISON THAT EVEN THE TOP DOCTOR IN THE COUNTRY DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT..
THAT PERSON HAS BEEN COLD-HEARTED AND EMOTIONLESS SINCE A LONG TIME AGO,
AFTER A CAREFREE TIME, EVEN I HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT FACT.
THAT BASTARD OLD MAN!

TIME FLIES...
IT HAS ALREADY BEEN A MONTH!
I DON'T REALLY HAVE A REASON TO STAY IN THIS QUARTER.
NO. I RECOVERED IN 2,3 DAYS BUT YOU HAD SEVERE INJURIES. YOU HAVE TO MAKE SURE YOU GET YOUR REST.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HESITATE SINCE THE EMPEROR IS FULLY LOOKING AFTER YOUR RECOVERY.
This is important
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...
BUT ...
YES...
Here
SEIRAN,
LET'S GO HOME TOMORROW.
MY LADY...

THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN DO.
IS IT OKAY?
I LEARNED THIS WELL THIS TIME.
THINGS THAT I CAN DO, THINGS THAT ONLY I CAN DO...
I HAVE NO PURPOSE TO REMAIN IN COURT, NOW THAT HIS MAJESTY BEGAN TO GOVERN PROPERLY.
BESIDES, THIS IS NOT THE PLACE WHERE I BELONG.
PLUS, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HOME IF I'M NOT THERE?
RIGHT? I HAVE TO RESUME THE STUDY SESSION AND JOBS AS HANDMAIDEN WILL PROBABLY BE AROUND FOR THE SUMMER FESTIVAL.
MY JOB AT THE IMPERIAL HARLEM IS OVER.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HIM?
I'VE ALREADY TOLD HIM.
HIS MAJESTY WILL MISS YOU.
HUH? OH YEAH. HE WAS MUMBLING SOMETHING...
What was that?
THAT'S... HOW HE EXPRESSES HIS MOST DEPRESSED FEELINGS, MY LADY...
DID HIS MAJESTY HEAD TO THE GARDEN AFTERWARDS?
DON'T YOU THINK HE SHOULD BE A BIT MORE UPSET WHEN BIDDING FAREWELL?
SURPRISINGLY, HE ONLY SAID "IS THAT SO."
ARE YOU SAD AS WELL?
YES... I HAD FUN FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS.
YES...
I SORT OF SENSED IT I THINK HE HAS GOTTEN QUITE ATTACHED.
HIS MAJESTY IS PROBABLY VERY DEPRESSED INSIDE.

BUT...
NEXT TIME, HE SHOULD TAKE IN A REAL WIFE.
SOMEONE THAT IS MORE BEAUTIFUL AND INTELLIGENT, A REAL PRINCESS.
MY LADY...
YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT SUCH THING...?
THEN MAYBE HIS HOMOSEXUAL PREFERENCE WILL DISAPPEAR AND THE HEIR PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED!
THE COUNTRY WILL BE STABLE! NOTHING MORE TO SAY!

AS YOU ARE.
HIS MAJESTY HAS ARRIVED.
YOU'RE... GOING HOME TOMORROW?
BEFORE YOU DO, I WANTED THE TWO OF YOU TO LISTEN WHAT I HAVE TO SAY.
I HAD AN ELDER BROTHER WHO I DEARLY LOVED.

ELDER BROTHER SEIEN WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT WAS KIND TO ME.
RYUUKI.
THERE YOU ARE.
HE WAS THE SECOND BROTHER...
WHEN I WAS ALL ALONE...
WHENEVER I CRIED,
ONLY MY ELDER BROTHER SEARCHED FOR ME AND FOUND ME.
I WASN'T SAD AT ALL WHEN MY MOTHER DIED... WHEN MY OTHER ELDER BROTHERS DIED.
I CRIED AND CRIED...
BUT WHEN ELDER BROTHER SEIEN DISAPPEARED, I WAS SO SAD... IT FELT LIKE MY HEART WAS BEING CRUSHED...
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN MY ELDER BROTHER SINCE, NOT EVEN FOR A DAY.

I ALWAYS WAITED FOR HIM...
I WAITED... BUT WHEN I REALIZED THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE, I WANTED TO GO FIND HIM.
I BELIEVED THAT ELDER BROTHER WOULD ONE DAY COME BACK.
IT WOULDN'T HAVE MATTERED IF I ALONE, THE YOUNGEST CHILD, DISAPPEARED.
BESIDES, THEY TREATED ME AS IF MY EXISTENCE DIDN'T MATTER AT ALL.
I WAITED FOR THE MOMENT TO LEAVE THE COURT AND GO FIND ELDER BROTHER SEIEN.
THAT'S WHY I WAS FED UP WHEN GRAND MASTER SHOU TOLD ME TO BECOME EMPEROR.
YOU'RE PLANNING TO IMPRISON ME HERE?!
YOU SHOULD JUST BECOME EMPEROR!
THAT OLD MAN, HE SAID HE WOULD RESIGN IF I REFUSE TO TAKE THE THRONE.
AT THAT TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WASN'T FUNCTIONING AND ONLY GRAND MASTER SHOU HAD THE POWER TO MOVE THE COURT.

FOR THE CIVILIANS ...
PLEASE.
BUT I HADN'T LOST ONE LAST HOPE.
HE DECLARED... THAT HE WOULD SACRIFICE THE CIVILIANS FOR THE EMPEROR.
IN THE END, I ASSUMED THE THRONE FOR SHOUKA.
RYUUKI ...
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF PEOPLE DECIDE I'M NOT SUITABLE FOR EMPEROR?
I QUESTIONED WHO WILL THEN BE BROUGHT OUT.
A STUPID EMPEROR WHO WON'T GOVERN.
SOMEDAY, SOMEONE WILL CALL OUT FOR...
THAT'S HOW MUCH ELDER BROTHER SEIEN MEANT TO ME.
THE HIGHLY COMPETENT SECOND PRINCE...
SEIEN.

I DIDN'T DECEIVE YOU.
SHUREI.
I WAS TRULY A SELF-CENTERED ...
STUPID EMPEROR.
IT'S OKAY,
YOU'RE A DIFFERENT PERSON NOW.
RYUUKI ...
RIGHT?
SHUREI ...
YOUR ELDER BROTHER WILL PROBABLY UNDERSTAND.

RIGHT, SEIRAN?
YOU'LL PROBABLY BECOME A FINE EMPEROR.
YES.

SEIEN ANIUE...
I'VE DONE SOME THINKING THIS PAST MONTH...
I... STILL WANT TO RETURN THE THRONE TO YOU,
I'D BE SATISFIED JUST ASSISTING YOU...
SO YOU'RE HERE...
Ah--
ANIUE...

YOUR MAJESTY I'M NOT PRINCE SEIEN
YOU ARE THE EMPEROR, THE IMPERIAL COURT HAS REVIVED UNDER YOU.
PRINCE SEIEN IS NOT NEEDED ANYMORE.
.....
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
ALSO, PRINCE SEIEN HAS...
FOUND A WARM AND LOVING FAMILY,
BEING ABLE TO WORK FOR A WARM MASTER AND LIVELY MISTRESS. THIS IS HIS GREATEST HAPPINESS.
SEEING THAT HIS FAVOURITE YOUNGER BROTHER IS WORKING SO HARD, HE IS ALSO HAPPY.
BEING ABLE TO SECRETLY PRAY FOR YOUR SAFE JOURNEY IN LIFE,
I'M ALREADY CONTENTED.

I THINK PRINCE SEIEN WOULD BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THIS.
Smile
BUT HE... IS EASILY CONTENTED. HE'D BE HAPPY JUST TO HEAR YOU CALL HIM OLDER BROTHER.
I DEFINITELY ...!
I REALLY LIKE... ANILIE A LOT...
THE ONE I LIKE THE MOST...
WANTING TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER ...
STILL SO STUBBORN.
I DON'T WANT IT TO BE LIKE THIS!

IT'D BE REALLY TROUBLESOME IF YOU STILL SAY THESE KIND OF THINGS,
AND CAUSE PRINCE SEIEN WHO IS BESIDE YOU TO RUN AWAY.
RUN AWAY...?
YES... MEANING NOT EVER APPEARING AGAIN.
IS THAT OKAY THEN?
!

.....
YOU MUST ENDURE IT...
I DON'T WANT...
THEN YOU MUST ACCEPT THAT HE IS AT ANOTHER PLACE LOOKING AFTER YOU.
CLUTCH
EN...
YES.
WHY DOES... SEIRAN HAVE THIS KIND OF EXPRESSION?
HMPH
IT'S HARD TO TELL THAT HE'S ACTUALLY AROUND THE SAME AGE AS ME...
AH...
ANI...
NO..
THEN RETURN TO YOUR ROOM NOW.

DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE OLDER THAN SHUUEI?
BECAUSE I'M OF INDETERMINATE AGE, SO I DON'T KNOW HOW OLD I AM...
SHOCKED
ANIUE...
THAT'S RIGHT, ANIUE HE...
ONLY TREATS ME WARMLY.
WHAT A SURPRISE... YOU THINK I SEEM MORE MATURE THAN HIM?
LET US DEPART.
ALRIGHT!

THANK YOU FOR BIDDING FAREWELL, EVERYONE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY.
IT'S A PITY I CAN'T GREET GRAND MASTER SHOU...
Working, I heard.
SHURE!... DON'T BE FOOLED BY THAT TRICKSTER OLD MAN.
FOOLED? EH?
WHAT?
SHURE! MARRIED ME FOR MONEY AND DUMPED ME AFTER SHE HAD ENOUGH...
DON'T SAY SUCH CRUDE THINGS!
HE'S NOT PLANNING TO PAY THE PROMISED MONEY, IS HE?
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!

IT'S CALLED LICIT PAYMENT!
HOW MUCH DID THAT OLD MAN PROMISE TO PAY YOU!?
500 PIECES OF GOLD.
HOW CHEAP!
WAIT, SHUREI, I CAN PAY THREE TIMES AS...
OKAY OKAY OKAY...
DESPERATE MEN AREN'T WELL LIKED.
WHA?
DO YOU HONESTLY THINK YOU CAN SURPASS SEIRAN?
YOU ARE GOING TO CHALLENGE AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?
LADY SHUREI, I'LL VISIT YOU FROM TIME TO TIME. WILL YOU COOK FOR US?
.....
Why, of course, if you bring the money to buy the ingredients!!
Just kidding!♡ Please come any time!
SHE'S SO SERIOUS ...

THANK YOU!
YOU'VE DONE WELL. I COMMEND YOU.
SIR KOYUU?
LADY SHURE! ...
I WAS ABLE TO FULFILL MY DUTY AS A CONCUBINE BECAUSE OF YOU.
THANK YOU SO MUCH UNTIL NOW!
TAKE CARE THE REST FOR ME.
SHUSUI ...
RYUUK!...

GOODBYE
...
!

HUH !?
WHY YOUUU ...!!!
grab
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING BAD.
SO I WON'T TAKE THE SLAP!
HOW CAN YOU DO SUCH THING BEFORE THE PUBLIC!?
EH?
EH... WHAT DID HE SAY AGAIN...?
SHUEI PUTS IT THIS WAY...
I DIDN'T TELL YOU THIS, SO I'LL RELUCTANTLY TAKE A SLAP FOR IT.
OH YEAH, I FORGOT TO TELL YOU...
WHAT DID YOU SAY!?

I AM "AMBIDEXTROUS".
WHAT !?
YOU LIKE NOT JUST MEN BUT WOMEN... TOO...?
DOES THAT MEAN...
YES. I LOVE YOU, SHURE!!
.....

UNBELIE-
VABLE!
YOU
HELPLESS
MAN!!
SLAP!

I WANTED TO SAY GOODBYE. HOW CRUEL OF HIM TO LOCK ME UP.
THERE YOU ARE.
SOU.. YOUR "FLOWER" WAS A DAPHNE, WASN'T IT?
ENJUN'S "FLOWER" WAS A CHRYSAN-THEMUM.
THE THREE OF US USED TO DRINK AND GAZE THE COUNTRY FROM HERE.

YOU DID A STUPID THING, SHOU.
BUT YOU DID IT WELL.
YES... FULL OF PRIDE AND HONOR, THE FLOWER IS JUST LIKE HIM.
DON'T LEAVE ME TOO EARLY.
SOU...
AS THE MYTH OF SAIUNKOKU SUPPOSES,
SAIHASSEN OVERSEES THE COUNTRY IN A DIFFERENT FORM WITHOUT ANYONE KNOWING ABOUT THEIR EXISTENCE.
BONK

SHUREI ...
WATCH ...
YOU WILL RETURN SOON.
THE BEGINNING STORY ENDS LIKE THIS.
NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW ABOUT THE CONCUBINE THAT EDUCATED AND GUIDED THE EMPEROR IN THE IMPERIAL HARLEM.

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI VOL2 CH8 / END)

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 08

Scanner	Cienna
Translator	rgveta
Editor	Sakurinha
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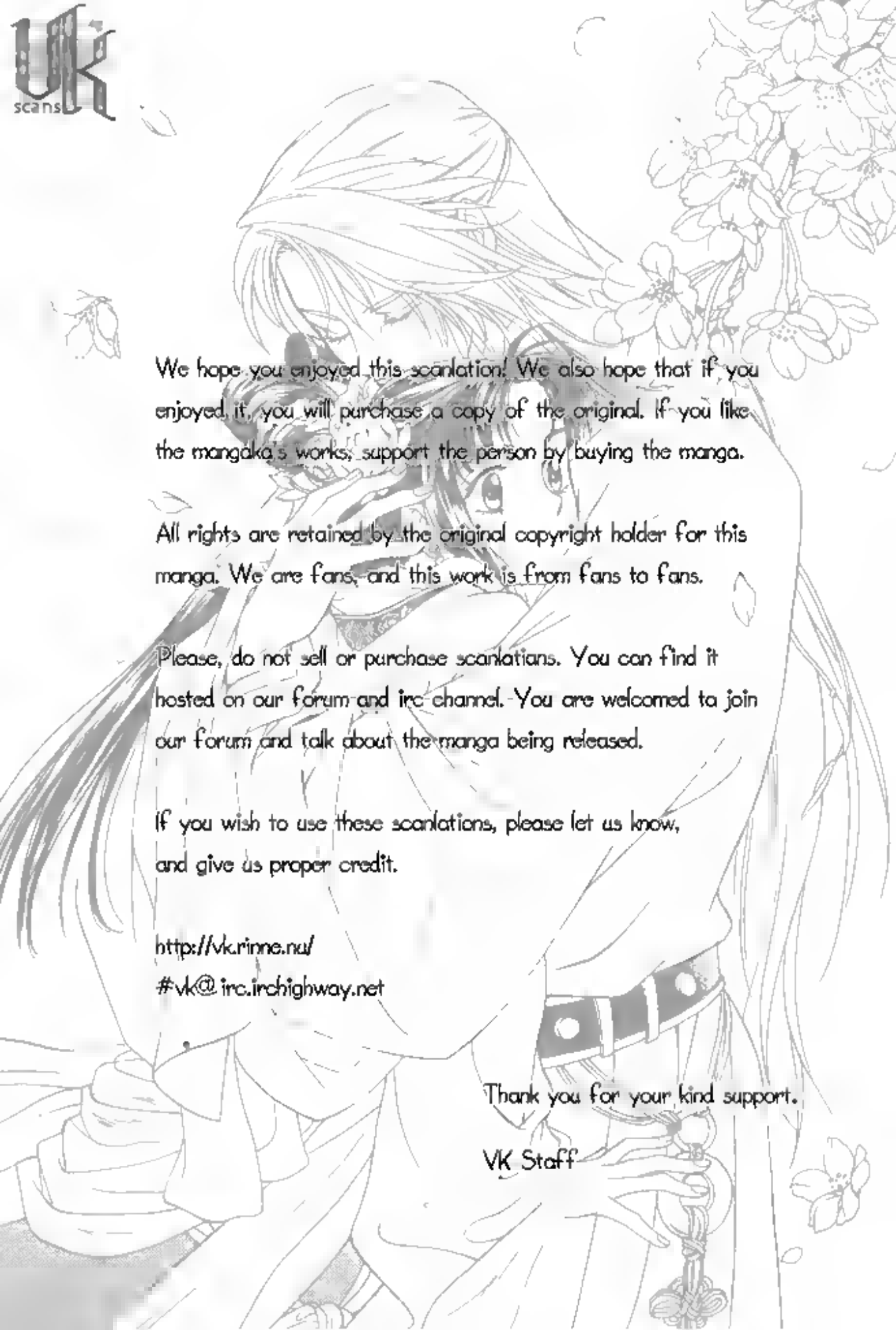

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Here Father! Today's lunch~~~
ONE COLD WINTER DAY,
BEFORE HIS MAJESTY AND THE SHUIREI MET.
It's cold so I made this!
IT'S RATHER SPECIAL!!
TADAH
FATHER, THIS IS THE ONLY THING YOU CAN STEAM WELL.
WHY?
DON'T FORGET TO STEAM IT BEFORE YOU EAT IT. DON'T OVERDO IT.
I KNOW. THANK YOU, SHUIREI.
HERE, THIS IS SEIRAN'S SHARE.

I'M GOING TO WORK NOW,
I'LL BE AT THE TEMPLE IN THE AFTERNOON.
I'M OFF!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? IT'S NOT THAT DIFFICULT TO WATCH THE TIME WHEN STEAMING SOMETHING.
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE
BUT YOU CAN'T DO OTHER SIMPLE TASKS, FATHER.
WHAT A SCURRY CHILD.
IT'S MY LADY'S SPECIAL BUNS. HOW EXCITING.
YES... YES.
HER BUNS HAVE ALWAYS TASTED DELICIOUS.
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN SHUREI'S TASTE BETTER?

BIGGER SEEMS MORE ENJOYABLE.
WHY DID YOU MAKE IT SO BIG?
IN ANY CASE ...
IT SEEMS HEALTHIER THOUGH.
Hm?
THE DIFFERENCE IS OBVIOUS.
You put something extra...
WE USED THE SAME INGREDIENTS, LOOKED AT THE SAME RECIPE, AND MADE IT AT THE SAME TIME! IT HAS TO TASTE THE SAME.
I REMEMBER MADAM WAS ANGRY SO SHE PACKED THOSE STEAM BUNS FOR YOUR LUNCH.
YOU PRETENDED LIKE YOU DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING AND ATE SHULIREI'S SMALL STEAM BUNS WITH SHULIREI.
THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM AT ALL.
BLUNTLY
THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM HERE.
!!
YES. LET'S GO, SEIRAN.
MASTER, YOU'LL BE LATE FOR WORK.
.....

WELCOME, YOUR MAJESTY.
ARE THOSE... STEAM BUNS?
YES.
SHOUKA.
AM I SUPPOSED TO EAT THIS ALL BY MYSELF?
SIGH
THAT DAY ...
I'LL STEAM THEM FOR YOU.
LORD RYUUKI ...

DO YOU KNOW WHERE ELDER BROTHER IS?
AH...
WHAT A YOUNG VISITOR.
FLINCH
LET'S TALK AFTER WE TREAT THE SCRATCHES.
GROWL
WHAT ARE THE HAND MAIDENS DOING!?
WELL, LET'S EAT TOGETHER.
LAST... MORNING ...?
WHEN DID YOU LAST EAT?

IT'S STILL WARM, GO AHEAD.
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
SO BIG...
THANKFULLY, THE JUICE FROM THE MEAT EASES THE TASTE. I GUESS IT'S AN IMPROVEMENT FOR MY WIFE.
IT TASTES DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE I ATE BEFORE I LEFT. SHE MUST HAVE PUT EXTRA HERBS.
MUNCH
MUNCH
.....
THERE ARE SOME MORE SMALL BUNS UNDERNEATH. WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
I'M FINISHED.
SIGH
I SUPPOSE IT SUITS THE MALNUTRITIONED PRINCE.

IT'S DELICIOUS!
MUNCH
THIS ONE IS SO SMALL...
HE'S GOING TO YELL AT ME.
DO YOU FEEL BETTER NOW?
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER MADE IT.
AH!
I ATE IT ALL!
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
LET'S WIPE YOUR FACE NOW.
WON'T HIT ME?
THIS PERSON ...

UM... CAN I READ BOOKS HERE?
OF COURSE.
CAN I COME AGAIN?
OH, BUT, I HAVEN'T ...
LET'S LOOK FOR A BOOK AFTER WE DRINK SOME TEA.
!
FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH FATHER'S TEA
FROM THEN, FROM TIME TO TIME,
MY WIFE PACKED LARGE STEAM BUNS,
AND LEFT.
IT WAS SO SUDDEN,
THAT I COULDN'T EVEN GO TO WORK FOR A WHILE.
SHOUKA.

...
SHOUKA?
WHAT HAPPENED, SHOUKA?
YOU WEREN'T HERE FOR A WHILE...
HE'S LIKE AN EMPTY SHELL!
IT'S NOT THE USUAL SHOUKA ...
SMALL STEAM BUNS ONLY?
IT'S NOT STEAMED YET.
ELDER BROTHER ..
LIKE MY ELDER BROTHER SEIEN.
THROB
SHOUKA MUST HAVE LOST SOMETHING PRECIOUS...

SHOUKA, THIS...
I'LL... STEAM THIS!
YEAH, JUST WAIT A MOMENT!
YOUR HIGHNESS?
FUU FUU
IF SHOKA EATS THESE WARM STEAM BUNS, HE'LL PROBABLY GET BETTER!
PROBABLY...

SHOUKA.
YOU'RE COVERED IN SOOT, YOUR HIGHNESS.
UM.. THESE BUNS ARE SMALL SO...
IS THE TIME... OKAY?
WOW!
IT SHOULD BE DONE.
MUNCH
IT'S DELICIOUS, SHOUKA...

WHAT'S WRONG?
SHOUKA?
I'M SORRY, YOUR HIGHNESS ...
YES, IT'S VERY DELICIOUS.
IT'S SO WARM.
I'LL TRY TO MAKE IT TASTE GOOD.
PLEASE EAT THIS AND GET BETTER!
FATHER!
FATHER, PLEASE DON'T CRY!
I CAN'T COOK THE RICE WELL, BUT I CAN MAKE THIS.
OKAY?

I WON'T BE ABLE TO EAT THOSE LARGE STEAM BUNS OR COMPLAIN ABOUT IT EVER AGAIN BUT...
I HAVE TO LIVE.
I STILL HAVE THESE SMALL STEAM BUNS...
HAVE THE SMALL, GENTLE HANDS ...
YOUR HIGHNESS... THANK YOU.

EVEN I THINK THESE ARE DONE WELL.
YOUR MAJESTY HAS BECOME QUITE SKILLED AT STEAMING THESE BUNS.
SHOUKA, IT'S DONE.
I GOT CAUGHT USING GENERAL SOH'S HELMET AS A POT THE FIRST TIME AND WAS SCROLLED AFTERWARDS.
It's hot.
IT'S GOOD, SHOUKA.
YES.
LORD RYUUKI?
WHY IS IT THAT...

SMALL STEAM BUNS WERE SERVED THIS MORNING,
BUT I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE EATING.
ALONE AT THE TABLE...
EATING COLD FOOD THAT HAS GONE THROUGH TESTS FOR POISON
IT TASTES DELICIOUS WHEN I EAT IT WITH YOU, SHOUKA.
FOR A LONG TIME, NO FOOD SERVED IN COURT TASTED MORE DELICIOUS THAN THESE BUNS.
HE'S SO UNINTERESTED IN HIS FUTURE...
HE DOESN'T LEAVE THE COURT AND DOES MINIMAL GOVERNMENT WORK...
THERE ARE EMOTIONS IN HIS EYES THAT WERE ONCE AN EMPTY GLASS MARBLE.
BUT HE WON'T TRY TO START SOMETHING ON HIS OWN.
THE EMPEROR NEEDS SOMEONE TO STAY BY HIS SIDE.

BY THE WAY, SHOUKA,
LONG TIME AGO... I REMEMBER EATING A REALLY LARGE STEAM BUN...
FOR HIS OWN GOOD.
GENERAL SOH AND I GAVE HIM ENOUGH POWER.
NOW HE JUST HAS TO STEP OUT.
VERY DELICIOUS.
IT WAS VERY DELICIOUS...
IT MUST BE A RECOLLECTION OF MEMORIES.
DELICIOUS?
I SUPPOSE SOME OF THEM WERE GOOD...
THAT HEALTH FOOD LIKE THING?

YES... LIKE THIS...
YES... IT'S HARD TO FORGET. IT FILLED THE CARRIER COMPLETELY.
IT'S HUGE...
.....
TODAY'S IS RATHER SPECIAL!
♡
REALLY, YOU NEVER FAIL TO AMAZE ME.
HM?
SHOUKA, THERE'S A PAPER STUCK AT THE TOP.

Best luck!
If you eat this, your body and heart will be warm. Something good will happen today and tomorrow!
LET'S WATCH THE SNOW AS WE EAT.
HEY, YOUR MAJESTY. I THOUGHT IT WAS GETTING COLD, AND LOOK, IT'S SNOWING.
Y... YES.

IT'S DELICIOUS!
YES.
THE STEAM IS AMAZING BECAUSE IT'S COLD.
SHE IS A GOOD DAUGHTER ...
YES, SHE IS MY WONDERFUL DAUGHTER..
MEET THE COOKER OF THIS BUN...
I'D LIKE TO MEET HER...
THAT EVEN MAKES THE HEART WARM.

BUT SOMEDAY, FOR ME...
NOT AS SHOUKA'S SHARE...
LET'S HOPE SOMETHING GOOD WILL HAPPEN.
I WONDER IF SHE'LL MAKE "RYUUKI" SOME OF THESE BUNS.
PERHAPS WHEN SPRING COMES...
AFTERALL, YOU DID DRAW THE "BEST LUCK".
THERE WILL BE.

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI VOL.2 EXTRA / END)

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

VOL 2 / EXTRA

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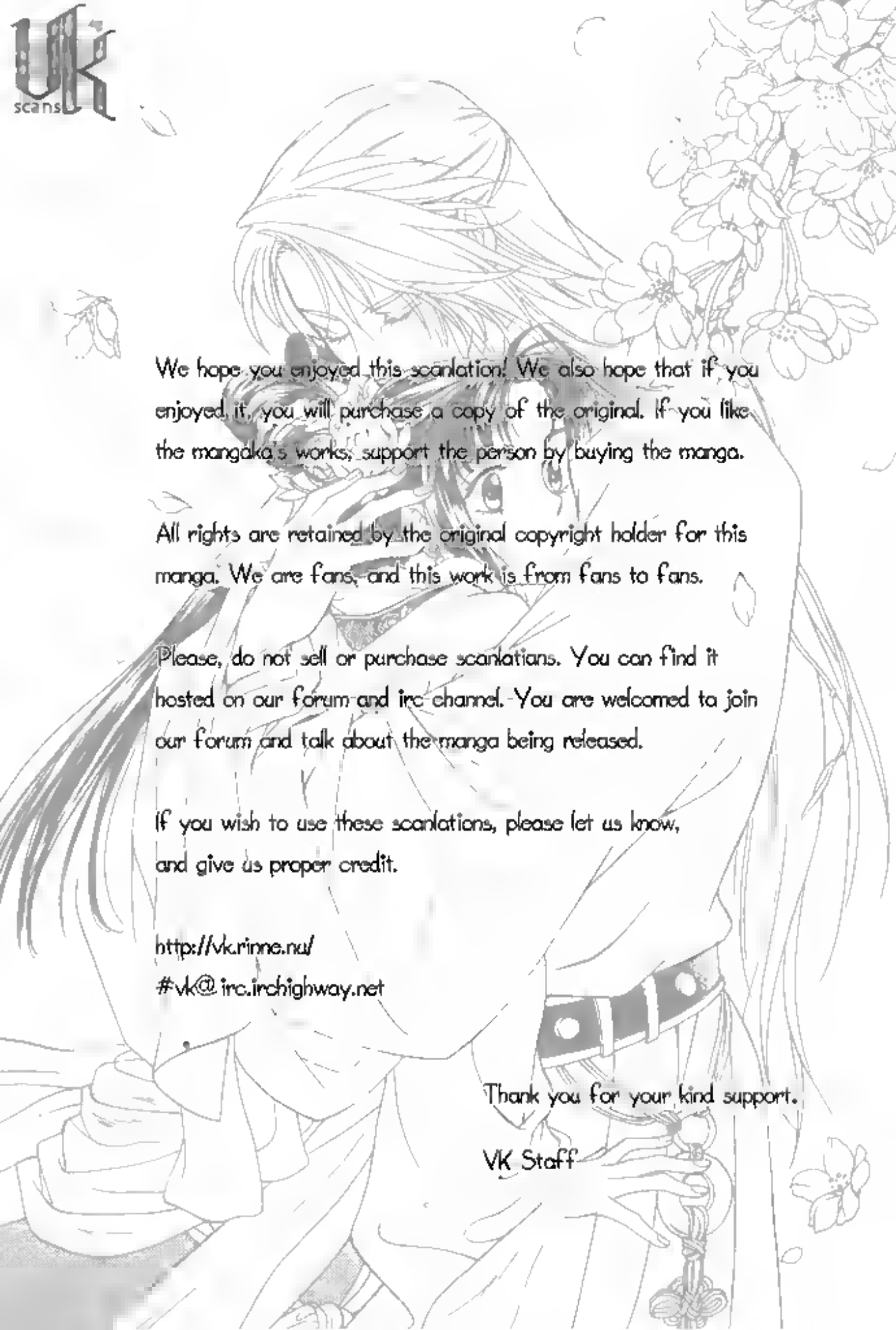

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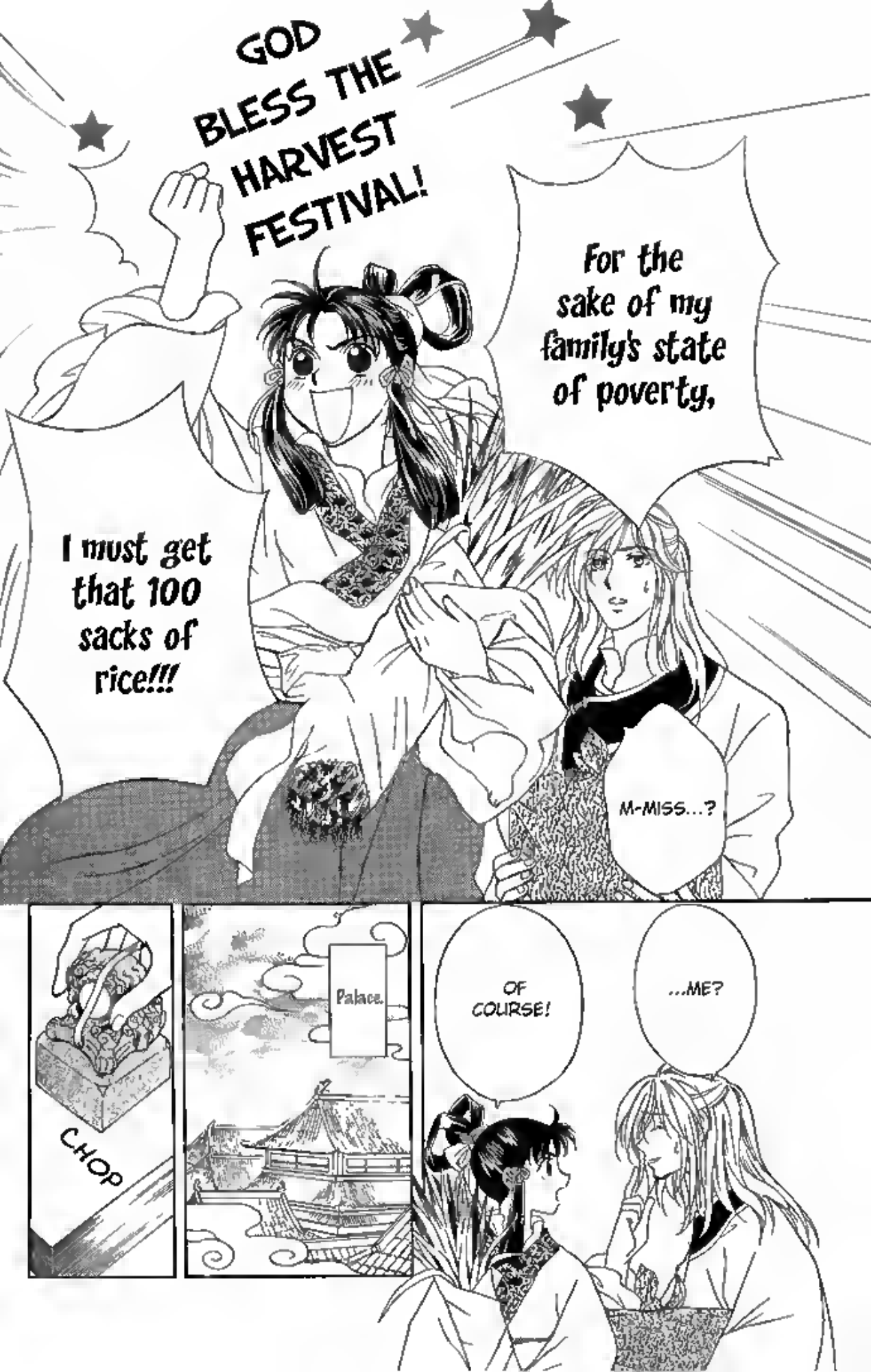
VK Staff

Saiunkoku. Capital: Kiyou.
a scorching summer that the city suffered through, thanks to the blessing of the weather.
autumn came with an unexpectedly abundant harvest.
HARVEST FESTIVAL ACTIVITY
MEN-IN-DRAG COMPETITION WINNER WILL BE AWARDED 100 SACKS OF RICE!!
Young Lady of the Kou Family. Kou Shuurei
SEIRAN,
Man-servant of the Kou Family. Shi Seiran.
YES, MISS?
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS DAY.

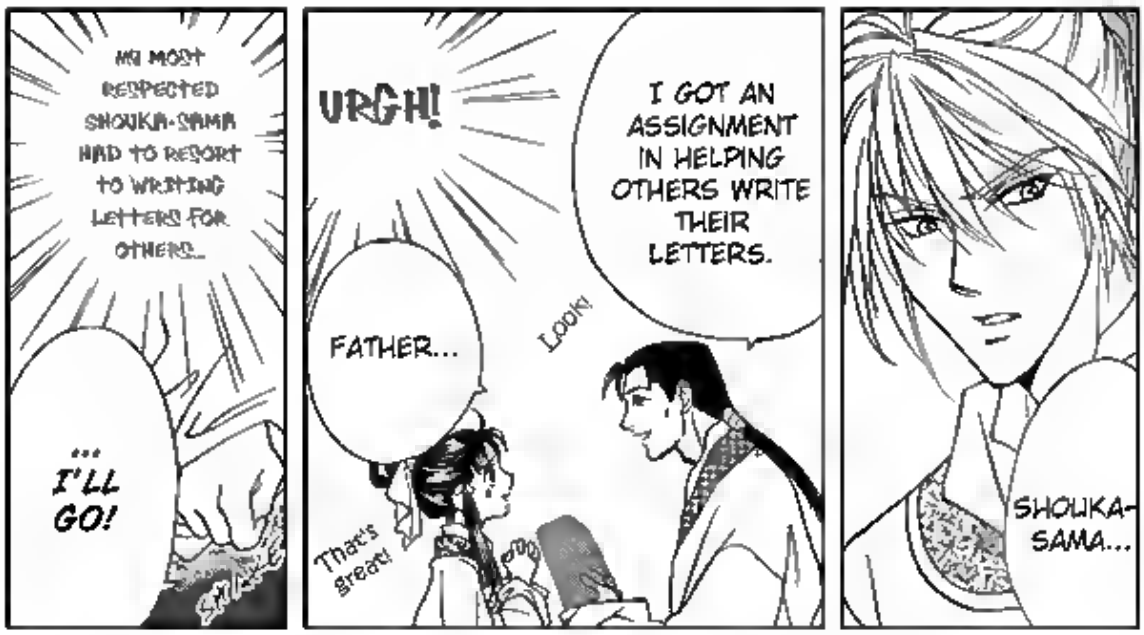

GOD BLESS THE HARVEST FESTIVAL!
For the sake of my family's state of poverty,
I must get that 100 sacks of rice!!!
M-MISS...?
CHOP
Palace.
...ME?
OF COURSE!

NO MATTER HOW MANY GIFTS I GIVE YOU...
IF YOU DIDN'T EARN THE MONEY YOURSELF, DON'T BUY PRESENTS FOR OTHERS FOR NO REASON!
BEING THE EMPEROR IS MY JOB. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO EARN MONEY?
THAT'S A LITTLE UNFAIR, ISN'T IT?
STMP
STMP
SIGH
SHUUREI IS SO COLD...
Saiunkoku Emperor. Shi Ryuuki.
NFu...
FuFuFu...
HAHA HAHA MUAHA HAHA HAHA
SHOCK
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIS MAJESTY?
THE PRIZE IS A HUNDRED SACKS OF RICE...
HM?
HARVEST FESTIVAL ACTIVITY
MEN IN DRAG COMPETITION
WINNER WILL BE AWARDED 100 SACKS OF RICE!
MERCHANTS

LET'S GO, YUURI.
O-OK.
Head of Home Affairs. Kou Kijin.
WHO CARES... HM?
AAH... WELL...
What was he thinking?! That stupid worm!?
And you are delegated to be the guard on duty for the Harvest Festival?!
WHAT DID YOU SAY...!!? IMPERIAL DECREE!?
How are we going to win that hundred sacks of rice now!?
I borrowed all that precious stones from where I was working, cosmetics... was that a crime?!
And I lost sleep sewing up the outfit, too!

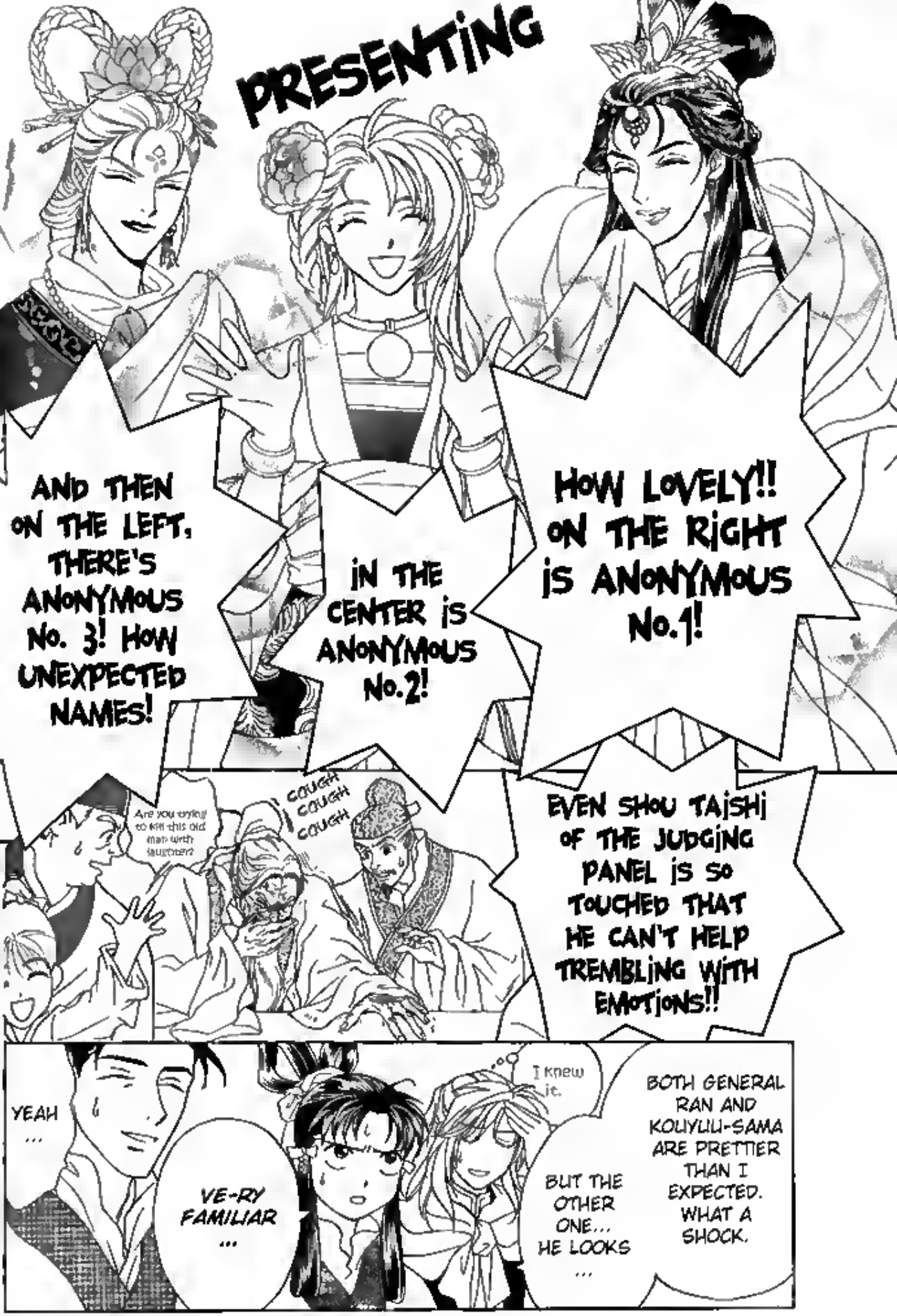
GENERAL RAN...
CHOMP CHOMP
Hee
IF I DON'T PARTICIPATE, PERHAPS THE RICE WOULD FALL FROM THE SKY.
SHOCK
SNIFFLE
MISS ...
Scribes Attendant. Li Kouyou
SNORTS
EH?
General of the Left Imperial Guards. Ran Shuwei.
At this point in time, will you replace Seiran?
AH NO, I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THE PR...
Even the third and fourth places have discount vouchers for all shops owned by the seven families???
We can split the prize 50-50, no, I can just take 20% of that! Even second place will get a year's worth of vegetables.
As long as I fixed the bottom hems of the dress, I'm sure you can fit.

ALRIGHT.
I THINK THAT'S A FINE IDEA, TOO.
GENERAL RAN DOES OWE US A FAVOR, DOESN'T HE?
!!
No WAY!!
IF KOUYUU GOES, I'LL GO TOO.
Master of the Kou Family. Kou Shouka.
DON'T FORCE OTHERS, SHUUREI.
DON'T WE HAVE A BIT OF RICE LEFT AT HOME?
FATHER.


MY MOST RESPECTED SHOUKA-SAMA HAD TO RESORT TO WRITING LETTERS FOR OTHERS...
...I'LL GO!
URGH!
I GOT AN ASSIGNMENT IN HELPING OTHERS WRITE THEIR LETTERS.
FATHER...
LOOK!
That's great!
SHOUKA-SAMA...

THIS IS GONNA BE FUN...
THE TOP PRIZE IS OUR GOAL!!

BONK!
BONK!
HERE! THE CLIMAX OF THE HARVEST FESTIVAL! THE FINALS OF THE MEN-IN-DRAG COMPETITION!!!
Harvest Festival
NOISE
NOISE


PRESENTING
AND THEN ON THE LEFT, THERE'S ANONYMOUS No. 3! HOW UNEXPECTED NAMES!
IN THE CENTER IS ANONYMOUS No.2!
HOW LOVELY!! ON THE RIGHT IS ANONYMOUS No.1!
Are you trying to kill this old man with laughter?
COUGH COUGH COUGH
EVEN SHOU TAISHI OF THE JUDGING PANEL IS SO TOUCHED THAT HE CAN'T HELP TREMBLING WITH EMOTIONS!!
YEAH ...
VE-RY FAMILIAR ...
I knew it.
BUT THE OTHER ONE... HE LOOKS ...
BOTH GENERAL RAN AND KOUYUU-SAMA ARE PRETTIER THAN I EXPECTED. WHAT A SHOCK.

WHAT IS YOUR MAJESTY DOING HERE?
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO ASK...
ARE YOU TWO TRYING TO FIGHT ME FOR SHUURE!'S HEART?!
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT FOR NOT LETTING SEIRAN PARTICIPATE, YOU STUPID EMPEROR!
I won't let you both win!! I'm younger than the both of you!!
RETARD! Where do we find an emperor this passionate about winning a drag contest...
AH-YA! WAIT!
HERE'S ANOTHER CONTESTANT!! THOUGH IT'S A LAST MINUTE ENTRY, BUT IT'S ALRIGHT!!
SHUFFLE
So, LET US INVITE THIS CONTESTANT ON STAGE!!! His NAME is ANON...

UHH!
Beautiful
DAZED
THAT'S ...
OOH

AND THAT BEAUTY...
GRIT TEETH
WHAT A NATURAL SMILE...
Oh
HE DIDN'T USE ANY MAKE UP.
We lost.
STUNNED
I'M FOURTH! AND I LOST BECAUSE I SOBBED?!
EVEN SO... THIS IS SUCH A SHAME. A SHAME...
HERE, AN EMPEROR CAN'T CRY OVER A MATTER AS SMALL AS THIS.
OF COURSE!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU WORKED HARD TO EARN SOMETHING!
WILL YOU ACCEPT?
THEN, DO YOU PLAN TO GIVE THE VOUCHERS FROM THE FOURTH PRIZE TO ME?

DON'T GO TOO FAR!
SMACKS
ouch!
Ah.
SHUURE! ...
A few days later.
So many gifts... Kou Kijin-sama sure is generous! ♡ ♡
The masked man, Kou Kijin. Nobody ever knows his true appearance (...that's impossible.)
Ah, he's in a good mood today

(SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI EXTRA 02 / END)

SAIUNKOKU MONOGATARI

EXTRA CHAPTER 02

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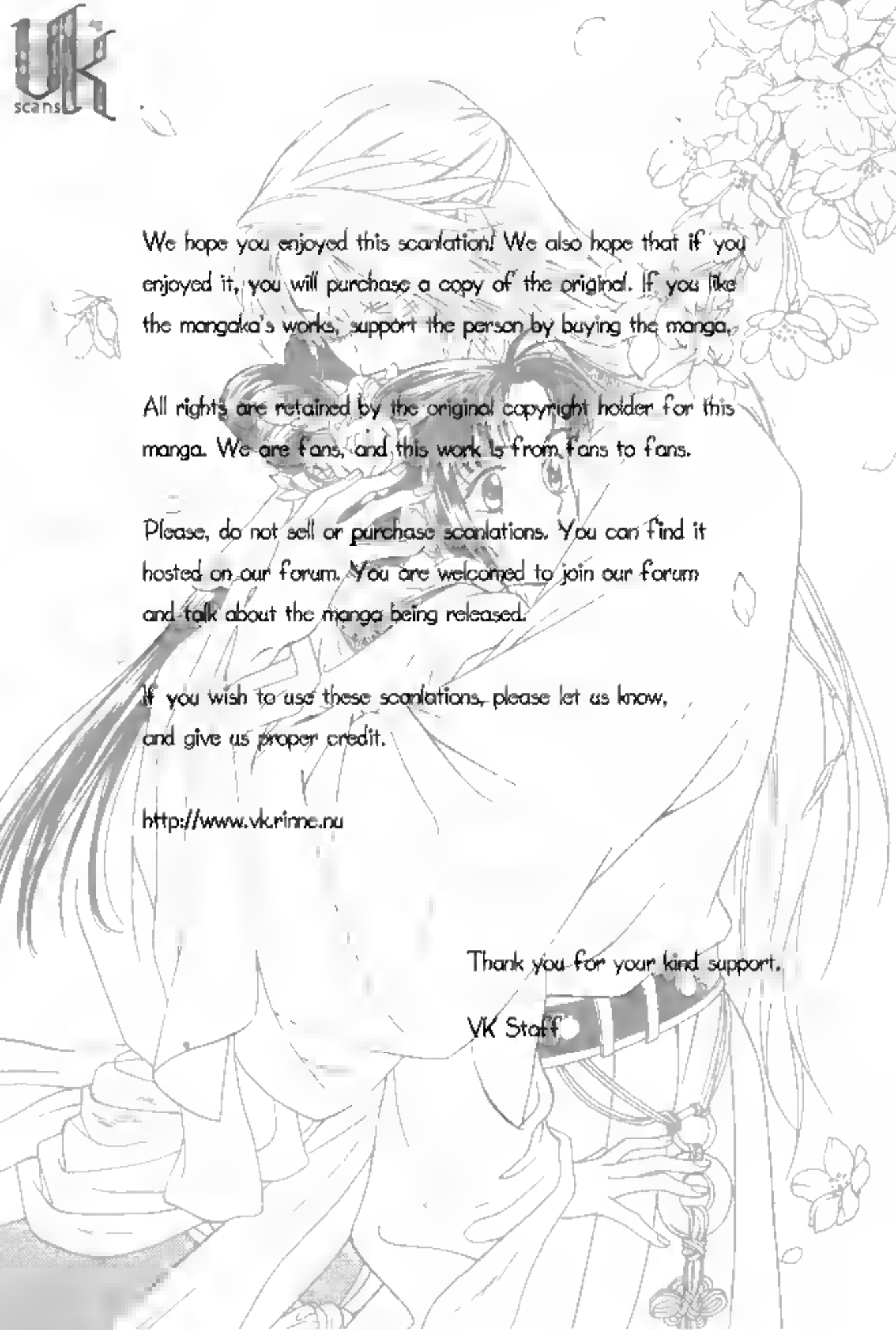

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